THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

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CONTRIBUTORS

BERNARD J. COOKE, S.J., has received a licentiate in philosophy and a master's degree at St. Louis University during the course of the present year.

THEODORE WOLF, S.J., Ph.D., made his doctorate studies at St. Louis University and received his degree there in 1945. He is now a member of the faculty of Mount St. Michael's, Spokane, Washington.

MARIANNE T. MILLER is a graduate student in the department of Philosophy at St. Louis University and is teaching philosophy at Maryville College, St. Louis.

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THE MUTABILITY-IMMUTABILITY PRINCIPLE IN ST. AUGUSTINE'S METAPHYSICS

PART I

IN STUDYING the writings of a philosopher it is of great interest to search for the basic outlook on reality that lay at the root of his thought. What precise view of things consciously or unconsciously guided the mind of a particular man it is not always easy to determine. That there should be such a fundamental viewpoint is reasonable; that there is, is brought out by several striking examples in the history of philosophy. St. Thomas Aquinas's insight into existence as the actuation of all perfection is what characterizes his approach to reality and establishes him in his pre-eminence in the realm of metaphysics.[1] Kant's "discovery" of the ideality of space and time is another instance of how a philosopher's whole thought is conditioned by his basic view of the world. Still other examples could be given, such as Plato's theory of the forms or Berkeley's "esse est percipi."

When we turn to St. Augustine the task of singling out one element of his thought is more than ordinarily difficult. Several notions—like those of truth, illumination, and unity—seem to be fundamental; and their importance has rightfully been stressed in studies on St. Augustine. Other notions have received comparatively little attention. One of them, an important point in St. Augustine's philosophy, is the subject of this article: the contrast between mutability and immutability.

One might attempt to establish the position of mutability-immutability in St. Augustine's thought by investigating in turn the philosophical problems that Augustine faced. Instead of following that procedure, this paper will incorporate the discussion of these problems into a study of the three levels of St. Augustine's world. This manner of treatment seems justified by the frequency with which this threefold division appears in St. Augustine's works. Because

[1] Cf. Gilson, *God and Philosophy*, pp. 62-73.

St. Augustine's thought is so much a unit, it is not possible to study mutability-immutability entirely by itself; and so some mention will be made of Augustine's teaching on such points as "mean" (*modus*), "reasons" (*rationes*), number, and unity. Obviously a complete treatment of these cannot be given in this article; rather, only those features will be treated that bear on the question of mutability.

If it is true that the ascent of the human mind to God is the heart of St. Augustine's thought,[2] it might be well in our study of the three levels of the Augustinian world to begin from the bottom and work up to God. The first step in our ascent will be a study of the world of sensible things, the material world, where things are far from permanent and where disorder and evil play such an important role.

St. Augustine adopted the Heraclitean-Platonic view of the material world. Still, as a Christian, he was forced to modify the doctrine of the Greeks in very essential points.[3] Whereas Greek thinkers taught the doctrine of an eternal necessity that governs the whole evolution of reality and tended to make the guiding force in the universe some immanent vitalizing principle,[4] Augustine, in view of his Catholic faith in a transcendent creating God, looked on the world as the unfolding of the providential plan of a personal and free Divinity.[5] With a free God and with free rational creatures, St. Augustine had a much better foundation for teaching the mutability (in a very real sense) of things in the world. At the same time, since the God of Christianity is an omnipotent God who governed even matter, St. Augustine could find an absolutely immutable element in reality.

As is all too evident, bodies, which constitute the material world, are of their very nature changeable and constantly changing. Nothing remains the same in the material world even for a short time.[6] Bodies are constantly moving from one place to another, changing

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[2] Cf. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin,* p. 29.

[3] Concerning the effect on philosophy of Christian revelation, and in particular of the doctrine of creation, see the writings of Anton Pegis: *St. Thomas and the Greeks* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1939); "In Defense of St. Augustine," *New Scholasticism,* XVIII (April, 1944), 97-122; "Matter, Beatitude and Liberty," *Maritain Volume of the Thomist,* V (January, 1943), 265-80.

[4] Cf. Dies, *Autour de Platon,* p. 532.

[5] Christopher Dawson in "St. Augustine and His Age," *A Monument to St. Augustine,* p. 71, stresses this point in support of his thesis that St. Augustine was the founder of a new theory of history and of time: ". . . he [Augustine] constantly insists on the organic unity of the history of humanity, which passes through a regular succession of ages, like the life of an individual man; and he shows how 'the epochs of the world are linked together in a wonderful way' by the gradual development of the divine plan."

[6] ". . . in eo nihil manet, nihil vel parvo spatio temporis habet eodem modo." *De Ordine,* II, xix, 50 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1018).

from one kind of being into something different, and changing their quantity and their qualities.[7] And, of course, this involves change in time; for whatever changes its place must also necessarily change in time, since time has its foundation in change.[8] If this double mutability, in time and place, belongs to material things of their very nature, what is there in bodies that is the root of it?

One reason we can give why bodies are changeable is that they have been created. Whatever is created, either immediately or mediately, is brought forth from nothingness. This means that these bodies did not always exist. It follows, then, that if they actually "changed" from not being to being, these bodies must be changeable.[9]

Creation, however, cannot be the sole explanation of the fluid being of bodies; for souls also were created, and yet they do not change from one place to another.[10] There must be something, some force, some element, in the corporeal universe that causes bodies to be continually changing. This is matter. The exact nature of matter in St. Augustine's world is hard to determine, as it is in every Platonic explanation of reality. So much, however, is clear: matter and mutability are inseparably linked. Perhaps they can even be identified.[11]

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[7] ". . . per tempus movetur animus . . . per locos autem corpus vel a terra in coelum vel a coelo in terram vel ab oriente ad occidentem vel si quo alio simili modo." *De Genesi ad Litteram,* VIII, xx, 39 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 388).

". . . densari atque rarescere, contrahi et dilatari, in minutias deteri et grandescere in molem non nisi corporum est." *Epistola CXXXVII* (ad Volusianum), c. ii, 4 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIII, col. 517).

Cf. also *De Ordine,* II, vi, 19 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1003); *De Vera Religione,* c. x. 18 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 130); *De Civitate Dei,* VIII, vi (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 231); *De Gen. ad Litt.,* VIII, xx, 39 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 388).

[8] "Omne autem quod movetur per locum, non potest nisi et per tempus simul moveri; . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt.,* VIII, xx, 39 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 388).

". . . tempora non fuissent, nisi creatura fieret, quae aliquid aliqua motione mutaret; cujus motionis et mutationis cum aliud atque aliud, quae simul esse non possunt, cedit atque succedit, in brevioribus vel productioribus morarum intervallis tempus sequeretur." *De Civ. Dei,* XI, vi (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 321).

Dawson, *op. cit.,* p. 69, says of Augustine: "His subtle and profound mind found a peculiar attraction in the contemplation of the mystery of time which is so essentially bound up with the mystery of created being. He was intensely sensitive to the pathos of mutability."

[9] ". . . solus ipse incommutabilis, omnia quae fecit, quia ex nihilo fecit, mutabilia sunt." *De Natura Boni,* I, i (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 551).

"Ecce sunt coelum et terra, clamant quod facta sunt; mutantur enim atque variantur." *Confessiones,* XI, iv. 6 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 811). Cf. also *De Nat. Boni,* I, x (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 554); *Contra Adversarios Legis et Prophetarum,* I, vi, 8 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 607); *Contra Secundinum Manichaeum,* I, xix (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 593-95).

[10] "Mutari autem animam posse, non quidem localiter, sed tamen temporaliter . . ." *De Vera Rel.,* c. x, 18 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 130). Cf. also *De Ordine,* II, vi, 19 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1003).

[11] This seems to be the opinion of Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Au-*

Throughout the writings of St. Augustine, matter is referred to as the principle of mutability.[12] It is that unformed something—not completely nothing—by which a thing changes from one form to another.[13] At times, St. Augustine uses "matter" and "mutability" interchangeably and speaks of mutability as capable of receiving all the forms that material things can have.[14] Mutability is called the "unformedness" of matter, which, even after forms come to matter, remains as a tendency of the material being to change to other forms.[15] Because mutability is that which opposes form in bodies, because it is of its essence a privation of order and "light" in bodies, mutability is compared to night.[16] St. Augustine himself struggled to express what he meant by matter or mutability. If one could say that it is a "nothing-something" or an "existing nonentity," that is what St. Augustine would call it.[17] As in the world of Plotinus, matter is at the rim of reality; it barely exists; it is almost nothing.[18] Still, though most unlike God, matter is created by God and so is something positive and something good.[19]

It does not seem that we can consider the Augustinian matter as a principle of being in the sense that it is such in a metaphysics like St. Thomas Aquinas's. Matter in St. Augustine seems to be rather the reification of the notion of mutability.[20] Being a Pla-

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gustin, p. 256: ". . . si indéterminée qu'elle soit, elle [i.e., matter] est quelque chose: ce par quoi les corps passent incessemment d'une forme à l'autre et, en quelque sorte, leur mutabilité même." The same view is expressed again on p. 266.

[12] *Conf.,* XII, viii, 8 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 829); *De Vera Rel.,* c. xviii, 35-36 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 137); *De Genesi Liber Imperfectus,* c. xii 36 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 235); *De Gen., ad Litt.,* II, xiv, 28 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 274-75).

[13] ". . . transitum de forma in formam per informe quiddam fieri suspicatus sum, non per omnino nihil." *Conf.,* XII, vi, 6 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 828). Cf. also XII, xii, 15 (col. 831).

[14] " . . . mutabilitas enim rerum mutabilium ipsa capax est formarum omnium, in quas mutantur res mutabiles." *Conf.,* XII, vi, 6 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 828). Cf. also *De Gen. ad Litt.,* II, xiv, 28 (PL, Vol. XXXIV, col. 275).

[15] ". . . potest quamvis in rebus formatis intelligi tamen in ipsa mutabilitate informitas materiae . . . in ipsa re facta atque formata eadem mutabilitas hoc est deficiendi, ut ita dixerim, possibilitas non appellatus sit; quia inest rebus factis, etiamsi non mutentur, posse mutari." *De Gen. ad Litt.,* II, xiv, 28 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 274-75).

[16] "Ut nondum specie formata materia non dicta sit, unde formanda erant cetera . . ." *Ibid.*

[17] "Si dici posset: Nihil aliquid, et Est non est, hoc eam dicerem; . . ." *Conf.,* XII, vi, 6 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 828).

[18] ". . . illud autem totum prope nihil erat, quoniam adhuc omnino informe erat; . . ." *Conf.,* XII, viii, 8 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 829).

[19] "Nonnullum ergo bonum est et capacitas formae: et ideo bonorum omnium auctor, qui praestitit formam, ipse fecit etiam posse formari." *De Vera Rel.,* c. xviii, 36 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 137). Cf. also *Conf.,* XII, vii, 7 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 828).

[20] See especially the passages referred to above (n. 13) in which Augustine uses *matter* and *mutability* interchangeably.

tonist,[21] St. Augustine followed the Platonic tendency of starting with the mind's notions and transferring them to the real world.[22] Now, when one looks about him and sees the various grades of being, one associates with each grade a certain degree of mutability.[23] And since there is an exact correspondence between mind and things, there is mutability in material things—which mutability we also call matter. Whereas in St. Thomas a substance is composed of two semi-substances or principles of *substance,* in St. Augustine a substance is composed of two formalities or principles of *substantiality.*[24]

If this interpretation of St. Augustine's teaching on matter is correct, it ought to follow that "form" in Augustine's world is objectivated immutability. To determine whether this is so or not, we must study the causes of permanence in corporeal things.

The ultimate cause of the permanence of material things is God. God's permanence is required for the existence and goodness of mutable things.[25] Behind the constant change in the world there is the unchanging divine law ordering all things,[26] giving to different things different participations in perfection. Since the formation of the universe is the work of divine wisdom,[27] God has fashioned the attributes of bodies according to the eternal forms (*rationes*

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[21] ". . . apud Platonicos me interim quod sacris nostris non repugnet reperturum esse confido." *Contra Academicos,* III, xx, 43 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 957).

On the influence of Plato and Plotinus on St. Augustine see: Boyer, *Christianisme et néo-platonisme dans la formation de saint Augustin;* Alfaric, *L'Evolution intellectuelle de saint Augustin* (especially pp. 374-76, where he discusses Augustine's acquaintance with Platonic and Neo-Platonic writings); Karl Adam, *St. Augustine, the Odyssey of His Soul,* pp. 37-38; Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom,* pp. 67, 97.

[22] For him [Augustine] as for Plato, the distinction between the logical order and the real order is not clearly drawn." Bourke, *op. cit.,* p. 97.

[23] Cf. *De Gen. ad Litt,* VIII, xx-xxvi, 39-48 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 388-92).

[24] Contrast for instance the statement in *Conf.,* XII, vi, 6 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 828), "mutabilitas enim rerum mutabilium ipsa capax formarum omnium," with St. Thomas's explanation of matter in *De Principiis Naturae ad Fratrem Silvestrum:* ". . . omne quod generatur, ex materia generatur; et quod corrumpitur, in materiam corrumpitur; quia materia est principium primum ex quo aliquid fit, et ultimatim in quod abit quod corrumpitur."

On the Platonic position regarding the exact correspondence between mind and things, cf. Pegis, "Cosmogony and Knowledge, Part I," *Thought,* XVIII (December, 1943), 643-64.

[25] " . . . nisi permaneret incommutabilis, nulla mutabilis natura remaneret." *De Vera Rel.,* c. x, 18 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 130). Cf. also *De Civ. Dei,* VIII, ix, (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 233); *De Genesi Liber Imperfectus,* c. xii, 36 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 235).

[26] "Deus cujus legibus in aevo stantibus, motus instabilis rerum mutabilium perturbatus esse non sinitur, frenisque circumeuntium saeculorum semper ad similitudinem stabilitatis revocatur; . . ." *Soliloquia,* I, i, 4, (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 871).

[27] ". . . per Sapientiam non formatam, sed per quam formantur universa." *De Vera Rel.,* c. xii, 24 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 132).

aeternae) that exist in Himself.[28] Mutable reality is orderly in so far as it is an imitation of, and participation in, the immutable eternal reasons.[29]

Bodies participate in divine immutability because God has given them a threefold principle of permanence: measure, number, and weight. Clearly, in a study of this type, it is not possible to make an exhaustive analysis of these principles. Rather, it will suffice for our purpose to point out how they are intrinsic forces that give bodies a limited and participated permanence.[30] In one of his clearest statements on the subject St. Augustine says:

> Since measure determines the proportions of each thing, number furnishes each thing with its species, and weight draws each thing to rest and stability, He is these things firstly, truly, and uniquely, who sets bounds to all, forms all, and orders all.[31]

Thus measure, number, and weight are the intrinsic principles manifested by proportion, species, and order. Measure is that which determines the arrangement of parts and due proportion of one part to another. This due proportion is what gives a body the fundamental orderliness that keeps it from falling back into nothingness.[32]

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[28] "Ut enim sic ex semetipsis afficiantur, vel anima ex corpore vel corpus ex anima, congruae rationes id faciunt, quae incommutabiliter vivunt in ipsa summa Dei sapientia quam nulla spatia locorum capiunt . . . Ut enim de pecoribus non virgae, sed pecora nascerentur, fecit hoc incommutabilis et invisibilis ratio sapientiae Dei, per quam creata sunt omnia." *De Trinitate,* III, viii, 15 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 877). Cf. also *De Gen. ad Litt.,* I, ix, 17 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 252); *Conf.,* I, vi, 9 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 664).

[29] "Unde diligenter inspicientibus quantum talis natura inspici potest, ordinata mutabilitate, id quod immutabile est imitari reperitur." *De Immortalitate Animae,* c. viii, 15 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1029).

[30] For the connection of these principles with mutability see *De Gen. ad Litt.,* IV, v, 12 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 300): ". . . ita disposita, ut haberent proprias mensuras suas, et proprios numeros, et proprium pondus, quae in eis pro sui cujusque generis mutabilitate mutarentur."

[31] "Secundum id vero, quod mensura omni rei modum praefigit et numerus omni rei speciem praebet, et pondus omnem rem ad quietem ac stabilitatem trahit, ille primitus et veraciter et singulariter ista est, qui terminat omnia et format omnia, et ordinat omnia." *De Gen.* ad Litt., IV, iii, 7 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 299). Cf., also *Conf.,* V, iv, 7 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 709); *De Nat. Boni,* c. i, 3 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 533); *De Gen. ad Litt.,* V, xxii, 43 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 337), and III, xvi, 25 (col. 290); *De Vera Rel.,* c. vii, 13 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 129); *De Trin.,* VI, x, 12 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 932).

[32] Thus *modus* is as it were the fundamental intrinsic principle of existence. Existence is several times linked with *modus* by Augustine. Cf. *De Vera Rel.,* c. vii, 13 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 129); *De Trin.,* III, viii, 15 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 877).

See in connection with this point those passages where Augustine speaks of the *convenientia partium* and the *pax formae,* both of which are connected by Augustine with *modus* and unity. *De Civ. Dei,* V, xi (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 154); *De Vera Rel.,* c. xi, 21 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 131).

Another interesting point which enters in here is the question as to whether Augustine taught a *forma corporeitatis.* There are passages such as *De Immort. Animae,* c. viii, 13-15 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1027-29), which are subject to such an interpretation. Yet the lack of a clear statement on the point and the almost complete absence of such passages in Augustine's more mature works, make any decision conjectural.

Weight is that which makes a thing tend towards its proper place in the world. A stone's weight makes it fall to the ground, for the proper place for a stone is on the ground.[33] The weight of each body is the reason why, in the totality of bodies, there is an order in which bodies occupy their correct place or at least seek to.[34] By an extension of the notion, weight is the tendency of a body towards whatever is good for it.[35] Number would seem to be that which makes a body be the kind of body that it is; it gives the body its form; it is that which, while it remains, keeps a thing in its species.[36] Number introduces into body an immutability that transcends bodies, because numbers are related to each other in proportions that are eternal and immutable.[37] The immutability of numerical ratios is for St. Augustine an absolute immutability[38] and recurs often in his writings as an example of immutability.[39] Perhaps this immutability of numbers is a partial explanation of St. Augustine's great interest in numbers.

Closely allied to number, and perhaps even more so to "modus," is the element of unity. St. Augustine speaks of unity as being the effect of the form (and therefore of number); and yet it seems also to depend on due proportion of parts.[40] Every being needs unity to exist; and the more perfect the unity, the more stable the

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[33] "Corpus pondere suo nititur ad locum suum. Pondus non ad ima tantum est, sed ad locum suum. Ignis sursum tendit, deorsum lapis. Ponderibus suis aguntur, loca sua petunt." *Conf.*, XIII, ix, 10 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 848).

[34] "Omnis enim res, vel substantia, vel essentia, vel natura, vel si quo alio verbo melius enuntiatur, simul haec tria habet; ut et unum aliquid sit, et specie propria discernatur a caeteris, et rerum ordinem non excedat." *De Vera Rel.*, c. vii, 13 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 129).

[35] ". . . qui motus in appetendis quae secundum naturam sunt, fugiendisque contrariis." *De Trin.*, IV, xvi, 21 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 902).

[36] ". . . decentissimos formarum suarum numeros habere non posse, nisi inde formentur ubi forma intelligibilis et incommutabilis simul habens omnia perseverat." *De Civ. Dei*, X, xiv (*PL*, Vol. XLI, vol. 292). Cf. also *De Vera Rel.*, c. vii, 13 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 129), and 42-79 (col. 158); *De Trin.*, III, viii, 15 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 877).

In the various forms in which these three principles are proposed, *number* is interchanged with *species* and *form*.

[37] "Sed unum ad duo vel duo ad quattuor verissima ratio est: nec magis heri fuit ista ratio vera quam hodie; nec magis cras aut post annum erit vera; nec si omnis iste mundus concidat, poterit ista ratio non esse." *De Ordine*, II, xix, 50 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1018). Cf. also *De Immort. Animae*, c. iv, 5 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1023).

[38] ". . . nam ter terna novem esse, et quadratum intelligibilium numerorum, necesse est vel genere humano stertente sit verum." *Contra Acad.*, III, xi, 25 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 947).

[39] See, for example, the references to the immutability of numerical ratios in the proof for God's existence in the second book of the *De Libero Arbitrio*.

[40] ". . . vis ipsa formae commendatur nomine unitatis." *De Genesi Liber Imperfectus*, c. x, 32 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 233).

In *De Trin.*, VI, x, 12 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 932, *unity* is substituted for *modus* to form the combination: *unity, form, order*. See also *De Vera Rel.*, c. vii, 13 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 129).

being's existence;[41] so that when we come to the perfect unity of simplicity in God we have perfect immutability. A body, though it be one, can never have perfect unity, for it must always have parts outside of parts.[42] Still, all bodies have a natural appetite to preserve their unity, imperfect as it may be, and resist the severing of one part from the others.[44]

Besides the connection of unity with proportion and number, there seems to be another force in bodies whose specific function is to make the activity of any given body a unified procedure. When bodies change in place according to their proper weight, when they grow larger or smaller in due proportion, when they generate or are generated according to their own form and number, there are a unity and a teleology in their operations that argue to the existence of an intrinsic principle guiding bodily activity along consistent lines.[45] This principle is the seminal reason (*ratio seminalis*).[46]

St. Augustine's chief stimulus in developing the doctrine of the seminal reasons was the exegetical difficulties in the book of Genesis. Faced with the statement that God rested on the seventh day[47] as opposed to the words of Christ "the Father worketh until now,"[48] St. Augustine said that God created all things at the beginning of

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[41] "Nunc vero cum dicit corporibus, Vos quidem nisi aliqua unitas contineret, nihil essetis, sed rursus si vos essetis ipsa unitas, corpora non essetis; recte illi dicitur, Unde illam nosti unitatem, secundum quam judicas corpora . . ." *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxxii, 60 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 149).

On the connection of unity with immutability, cf. Boyer, *L'Idée de vérité dans la philosophie de saint Augustin*, p. 61.

[42] *De Genesi Liber Imperfectus*, c. x, 32 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 234); *De Trin.*, VI, vi, 8 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 928). This point will be discussed in the following issue.

[43] "Omne quippe corpus verum corpus est, sed falsa unitas. Non enim summe unum est, aut in tantum id imitatur ut impleat: et tamen nec corpus ipsum esset, nisi utcumque unum esset." *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxxiv, 63 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 150).

[44] Cf. *De Musica*, VI, xvii, 58 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1192-93); *Conf.*, I, xx, 31 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 675).

[45] ". . . quot sint animalia genera, quae semina singulorum in exordiis, qui modus in incrementis, qui numeri per conceptus, per ortus, per aetates, per occasus, qui motus in appetendis, quae secundum naturam sunt, fugiendisque contrariis." *De Trin.*, IV, xvi, 21 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 902).

". . . ea iam facta modos et actus sui temporis acceperunt, quae ex occultis atque invisibilibus rationibus, quae in creatura causaliter latent, in manifestas formas naturasque prodierunt . . . etiam ista secum gerunt tamquam iterum se ipsa invisibiliter in occulta quadam vi generandi, quam extraxerunt de illis primordiis causarum suarum, in quibus creato mundo, cum facta est dies, antequam in manifestam speciem sui generis exorirentur, inserta sunt." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, VI, x, 17 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 346).

[46] This theory is developed most at length in the *De Genesi ad Litteram*. For discussion of the nature of these seminal reasons, cf. Boyer, "La théorie des raisons séminales," *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, II, 795-819; Woods, *Augustine and Evolution;* Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin*, pp. 261-65; O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine*, pp. 70-83.

[47] Gen., 2: 2-3.

[48] John, 5: 17.

the world; but many of these things were created only causally.[49] That is, God implanted in the elements of the world active seed principles that would develop into actual beings when conditions were appropriate.[50] These *rationes seminales* are not themselves the substantial part of the matter of the world but are invisible and incorporeal forces of order and proportion.[51] They govern the genesis and development of each thing according to the proper perfection of its species.[52] They are therefore the principles of the permanence and stability of "species" in the world; principles of immutability in the midst of continual change.

These principles of permanence—measure and number and order, the seminal reasons—all come from God, who is the supreme unity, supreme form, and supreme order.[53] Yet they do not come directly from God; for body gets its stability from soul, and soul in turn from God.[54] Body is very definitely inferior to soul; for soul is closer to those immutable models of order and unity, the eternal reasons.[55] As a consequence, soul is between God and body and

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[49] "Sicut autem in ipso grano invisibiliter erant omnia simul quae per tempora in arborem surgerent; ita ipse mundus cogitandus est, cum Deus simul omnia creavit, habuisse simul omnia quae in illo et cum illo facta sunt . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt,* V, xxiii, 45 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 338); cf. also IV, xxxiii-xxxiv, 51-55 (col. 318-20); V, iv, 11 (col. 325).

[50] *De Gen. ad Litt.,* V, xxiii, 44-46 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 337-38).

It is hard to determine just what sort of causality the *rationes seminales* are meant to exercise. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin,* pp. 261-65, emphasizes the connection of the seminal reasons with number and thus stresses the element of formal causality. Boyer, "La théorie des raisons séminales," p. 813, stresses the activity of the seminal reasons: "Il est impossible de considerer de telles raisons séminales comme simplement passives et dépourvues d'activité véritable. Explicitement, elles sont appelées des forces, des vertus; elles poussent les nombres à se dérouler; elles ne permettent pas seulement un développement donné, elles le déterminent, et il faudrait pour l'empêcher une intervention de Dieu ou un obstacle apparu dans le monde."

[51] "In corporis semine potest esse vis invisibilis, quae incorporaliter numeros agit, non oculis sed intellectu discernenda ab ea corpulentia, quae visu tactuque sentitur." *De Gen. ad Litt.,* X, xxi, 37 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 425).

[52] ". . . multo erit absurdius istas cotidianas naturae formas et species contra illas primarias omnium nascentium causales rationes suorum temporum peragere spatia." *De Gen ad Litt.,* VI, xiv, 25 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 349); cf. also VI, x, 17 (col. 346).

[53] "Haec igitur omnia, quae arte divina facta sunt, et unitatem quamdam in se ostendunt, et speciem, et ordinem . . . Oportet igitur ut Creatorem, per ea quae facta sunt intellectum conspicientes, Trinitatem intelligamus, cujus in creatura, quomodo dignum est, apparet vestigium. In illa enim Trinitate summa origo est rerum omnium, et perfectissima pulchritudo, et beatissima delectatio." *De Trin.,* VI, x, 12 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 932).

[54] ". . . tempore suo atque ordine suo hoc corpus restituatur pristinae stabilitati, quam non per se habebit, sed per animam stabilitam in Deo. Quae rursus non per se stabilitur, sed per Deum quo fruitur." *De Vera Rel.,* c. xii, 25 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 132).

[55] "Corpus autem minus est quam vita quaelibet; quoniam quantulumcumque manet in specie, per vitam manet." *De Vera Rel.,* xi, 12 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 132).

". . . summis illis aeternisque rationibus . . . prior afficitur anima quam corpus; . . ." *De Immort. Animae,* c. xv, 24 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1033).

acts as a transmitting medium between the eternal reasons and their resemblances: the principles of order in bodies.[56] Having come to soul in our ascent to God, we must leave the realm of mutability in time and place and ascend to the world of beings that are mutable only in time.

In St. Augustine as in Plotinus, man is a very strange creature. On the borderline between two orders of reality, he is half spirit, half animal. He is really a soul using a body and in many respects would be better off if soul were not joined to a corruptible body.[57] To St. Augustine's mind this link of body and soul is so strange that he can call man one of God's greatest miracles[58] and even go so far as to say that the hypostatic union is not more incredible than the union of body to soul.[59] For St. Augustine, the split between body and soul, between the corporeal and spiritual worlds, was very decided; it was the distinction between essentially diverse levels of reality. Since we have already seen St. Augustine's view of material things, we shall now discuss the immaterial element in man: soul.

Though St. Augustine states in the *De Libero Arbitrio*[60] that he is uncertain about the origin of the human soul (a problem he never fully solved), still in the *De Genesi ad Litteram* he does give an explanation that favors creationism.[61] As we have already seen,

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[56] ". . . a summa essentia speciem corpori per animam tribui . . ." *De Immort. Animae,* c. xv, 24 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1033).

[57] However, we should notice that the unity of man is closer in Augustine than in his Platonic predecessors. Not that Augustine gives any rational grounds for a true union of soul and body, but he seems to realize that man as Plato or Plotinus conceived him was out of place in the world of Christian revelation. (Cf. Pegis, *New Scholasticism,* XVIII [April, 1944], 117.) This realization is one that appears to have grown upon Augustine, for we can notice in his writings a progressively greater stress on the union of body and soul and a tendency away from the view that body of its very nature hinders the soul. Contrast, for example, a passage like that in *Solil.,* I, xiv, 24 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 882), where Reason speaks of soul as "in hac cavea inclusis," with St. Augustine's letter to Jerome: "Sed in alia superiore vita peccare animas et inde praecipitari in carceres carneos, non credo, non acquiesco, non consentio." *Epist.* CLXVI, c. ix, 27 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIII, col. 732). Cf. also *De Civ. Dei,* X, xxix (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 308), and XIV, xi (col. 418).

[58] "Nam et omni miraculo, quod fit per hominem, majus miraculum est homo." *De Civ. Dei,* X, xxii (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 291).

[59] "Quid ergo incredibile est, si aliqua una intellectualis anima modo quodam ineffabili et singulari pro multorum salute suscepta est? Corpus vero animae cohaerere, ut homo totus et plenus sit, natura ipsa nostra teste cognoscimus. Quod nisi usitatissimum esset, hoc profecto esset incredibilius; . . ." *De Civ. Dei,* X, xxix (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 308).

[60] "Harum autem quatuor de anima sententiarum, utrum de propagine veniant, an in singulis quibusque nascentibus novae fiunt, an in corpora nascentium jam alicubi exsistentes vel mittantur divinitus, vel sua sponte labantur, nullam temere affirmare oportebit." *De Lib. Arb.,* III, xxi, 59 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1299).

[61] ". . . humanae opinioni tolerabilius mihi videtur, Deum in illis primis operibus quae simul omnia creavit, animam etiam humanam creasse, quam

St. Augustine had recourse to the theory of seminal reasons in order to reconcile God's resting on the seventh day with the continuation of God's providential operation. After applying this theory to bodies, St. Augustine discusses the possibility of having a seminal reason for souls and concludes that it is more likely that in the creation of the universe human souls were created immediately, to be breathed into bodies at some later and appropriate time.[62] Men's bodies were created only causally, by the implanting of seminal reasons in the elements of the world.[63]

St. Augustine's description, in his commentary on Genesis,[64] of the creation of spiritual substances is most interesting because of the light it throws on his interpretation of participation, that crux of every Platonic philosophy. There are two moments in the creation of a spirit (be it angel or human soul, for essentially they are are on the same level of being).[65] The first step is the creation of a formless spiritual substrate,[66] sometimes identified with the "heaven" of the first chapter of Genesis[67] and sometimes called spiritual matter.[68] This unformed spirit then turns towards the God who made it; and by this conversion to the immutable Truth that now illumines it, the spirit is formed.[69] In other words, the formation of soul is a complexus of its own conversion to, and contemplation of, and participation in, the eternal Truth from which it proceeds and of the operation of immutable Truth in illuminating and communicating itself to the soul.[70] Participation and contempla-

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suo tempore membris ex limo formati corporis inspiraret: . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, VII, xxiv, 35 (PL, Vol. XXXIV, col. 368).

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] ". . . hominem ita factum sexto die, ut corporis quidem humani ratio causalis in elementis mundi, anima vero iam ipsa crearetur . . ." *Ibid.*

[64] *De Gen. ad Litt.* (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV). See especially the early books of this work.

[65] ". . . quemadmodum fatendum est, animam humanam non esse quod Deus est; ita praesumendum, nihil inter omnia quae creavit, Deo esse propinquius." *De Quantitate Animae*, c. xxiv, 77 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1077). Cf. also *De Lib. Arb.*, III, xi, 32 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1287).

[66] Cf. *De Gen. ad Litt.*, I, xv, 29 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 257), where Augustine stresses the fact that matter is prior to form not in time but only according to nature. "Non quia informis materia formatis rebus tempore prior est, cum sit utrumque simul concreatum . . . sed quia illud, unde fit aliquid, etsi non tempore, tamen quadam origine prius est, quam illud quod inde fit . . ."

[67] ". . . quae nomine coeli significata est . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, I, xvii, 32 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 258).

[68] "Non itaque temporali, sed causali ordine prius facta est informis formabilisque materies, et spiritalis et corporalis . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, V, v, 13 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 326).

[69] ". . . tunc imitatur Verbi formam, semper atque incommutabiliter Patri cohaerentem, cum et ipsa sui pro generis conversione ad id quod vere ac semper est, id est ad creatorem suae substantiae, formam capit, et fit perfecta creatura." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, I, iv, 9 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 249). Cf. also III, xx, 31 (col. 292).

[70] "Formatur autem conversa ad incommutabile lumen sapientiae, Verbum Dei

tion are linked as the passive correlatives of illumination and creation—a decided step beyond both Plato and Plotinus. The close association of these notions in St. Augustine's psychology will become clearer as we proceed.

Because it is created, soul is mutable.[71] This immediately sets it in a class of being distinct from God, for God is absolutely immutable.[72] It is in the light of this mutability of soul that St. Augustine answers the Manichean teaching that souls are parts of the substance of God Himself.[73] But soul is also set apart from bodies because its mutability regards only time, while bodies change in time and place.[74]

This notion of change and progression in time is one of the points in which St. Augustine most differed from the Greeks, from whom he took so much. Whether or not we can agree that St. Augustine "was actually the first man in the world to discover the meaning of time,"[75] it is true that St. Augustine broke with the Greek tradition that regarded time as an uncreated cyclic process, necessarily but inadequately imaging forth eternity.[76] One thing that undoubtedly helped to lead St. Augustine to his position on time was the Catholic doctrine of creation; for creation implies, as we have seen, the mutability of creatures; and mutability is the foundation of time.[77] Time and mutability are inseparable in Augustine's thought, as are their contraries, immutability and eternity.[78] There could be no time without mutability; there could be no time unless there were creatures changing successively from one thing to an-

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. . . Principium quippe creaturae intellectualis est aeterna Sapientia: quod principium manens in se incommutabiliter nullo modo cessat occulta inspiratione vocationis loqui ei creaturae cui principium est, ut convertatur ad id, ex quo est, quod aliter formata ac perfecta esse non possit." *De Gen ad Litt,* I, v, 10 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 250). Cf. also I, xvii, 32 (col. 258); II, viii, 16 (col. 269); IV, xxii, 39 (col. 311).

[71] ". . . clarum est eam esse mutabilem." *De Vera Rel.,* c. xxx, 54 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 140). Cf. also *De Immort. Animae,* c. v, 7 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1025).

[72] ". . . in contemplatione summae Sapientiae, quae utique animus non est, nam incommutabilis est), etiam seipsum, qui est commutabilis animus intuea-tur." *De Lib. Arb.,* III, xxv, 76 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1308).

[73] "Sic autem Manichaei non desiperent vel potius insanirent, si Dei naturam, sicuti est, incommutabilem atque omnino incorruptibilem crederent . . . Animam vero, quae voluntate mutari in deterius et peccato corrumpi potuit, atque ita incommutabilis veritatis luce privari, non Dei partem, nec ejus naturae quae Dei est, sed ab illo conditam longe inparem Conditori Christiana sanitate senti-rent." *De Civ. Dei,* XI, xxii (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 336).

[74] "Mutari autem animam posse, non quidem localiter, sed tamen temporaliter, suis affectionibus quisque cognoscit. Corpus vero et temporibus et locis esse mutabile . . ." *De Vera Rel.,* c. x, 18 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 130).

[75] Dawson, *op. cit.,* p. 69.

[76] Cf. *ibid.,* pp. 69-72.

[77] Cf. *supra,* n. 8.

[78] ". . . millia dierum in temporis mutabilitate intelligantur; unius autem diei nomine incommutabilitas aeternitatis vocetur." *De Lib. Arb.,* III, xxv, 77 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1309).

other.[79] Time follows from this succession. The very fact that creatures cannot possess more than one time at once is an indication of their mutable character.[80]

Though mutable, the human soul is still immortal.[81] This is due to the fact that the human soul is inseparable from its *ratio,* for corruption always involves a thing's losing its *ratio.*[82] It is proper that souls be immortal, for they are on a higher level of being than bodies, whose property it is to corrupt. In fact, nothing is closer to God than souls; no nature is above souls except God; for soul is the immediate image of God and of the eternal reasons in God.[83]

If it be closest in being to God, soul, besides its intrinsic mutability, must have principles of permanence. Measure, number, and weight are not restricted to bodies; but rather, as principles of immutability, they are more proper to things less mutable than bodies. God has given these principles to intellectual creatures to guide their mutations.[84] In souls there should be a due *moderation* in operation rather than a hasty and immoderate rushing ahead. There is a definite *number* of the affections and virtues of the soul, by which the character of the soul is formed and soul is withdrawn from the diffformity of ignorance and approaches the form and beauty of Wisdom. There is the *weight* of the will—its attraction towards, and love of, what is good for the soul and its flight from what ill befits it.[85]

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[79] ". . . mutabilis mundus constat et non constat, in quo ipsa mutabilitas apparet, in qua sentiri et dinumerari possunt tempora, quia rerum mutationibus fiunt tempora, dum variantur et vertuntur species, quarum materies praedicta est terra invisibilis." *Conf.,* XII, viii, 8 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 829).

[80] ". . . quaecumque in tempore simul esse non possunt, et tamen a futuro in praeteritum transmittuntur, mutabilia sint necesse est." *De Immort. Animae,* c. iii, 3 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1023).

[81] ". . . et quod sit immortalis secundum quemdam vitae modum, quem nullo modo potest amittere; secundum quamdam vero mutabilitatem, qua potest vel deterior vel melior fieri, non immerito etiam mortalis possit intelligi; quoniam veram immortalitatem solus ille habet, de quo proprie dictum est: Qui solus habet immortalitatem." *De Gen. ad Litt.,* VII, xxviii, 45 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 372).

[82] "Igitur, si immortalis est ratio, et ego qui ista omnia vel discerno vel connecto, ratio sum; illud quo mortale appellor, non est meum." *De Ordine,* II, xix, 50 (*PL,* Vol. XXXII, col. 1018).

[83] "Nulla enim propior natura est, qua diligenter inspecta, possit etiam Deus, qui supra omnem creaturam suam incommutabilis permanet, incorporaliter cogitari, quam ea quae ad ipsius imaginem facta est: et nihil vicinius, aut fortasse nihil tam consequens, quam ut credito quod anima corpus sit, etiam Deus corpus esse credatur." *De Gen. ad Litt,* X, xxiv, 40 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 426). Cf. also *De Civ. Dei,* XI, ii (*PL,* Vol. XLI, col. 318).

[84] ". . . haec ergo tria: modus, species, ordo, tamquam generalia bona sunt in rebus a Deo factis, sive in spiritu, sive in corpore." *De Nat. Boni,* I, iii (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 555).

[85] "Est autem mensura aliquid agendi, ne sit irrevocabilis et immoderata progressio; et est numerus et affectionum animi et virtutum, quo ab stultitiae deformitate, ad sapientiae formam decusque conligitur; et est pondus voluntatis et amoris, ubi apparet quanti quidque in appetendo, fugiendo, praeponendo, postponendoque pendatur." *De Gen. ad Litt.,* IV, iv, 8 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col.

Just as there was in bodies a *ratio* to guide the orderly functioning of the whole, so too in the soul there is the *ratio hominis*. This *ratio* of the human soul is not a seminal reason, since it itself is a medium for conveying the orderliness of the eternal reasons to the body.[86] The human reason is a direct participation in the eternal reasons, whereas seminal reasons are a participation once removed. Human reason is at the same time the formative and ordering principle in the human soul, and the soul's power of intellectual activity.[87]

While there is in a man only one reason, St. Augustine distinguishes between the *superior reason* and the *inferior reason*.[88] These are not two distinct faculties, but two uses of reason.[89] Because of the position of the soul between God and bodies, the soul can turn its gaze either to what is above it or to what is below it.[90] If

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299). Cf. also *Conf.*, XIII, ix, 10 (*PL*, Vol XXXII, col. 848); *De Trin.*, VI, x, 12 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 932).

[86] "Corpus enim nullum fit, nisi accipiendo per animam speciem." *De Immort. Animae*, c. xvi, 25 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1034).

". . . et quemadmodum anima ipsius veritatis particeps fiat, et corpori ordinem et pulchritudinem praestet . . ." *De Genesi Contra Manichaeos*, I, xxv, 43 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 194).

[87] The exact nature of the *ratio hominis* in Augustine's explanation of reality is hard to determine. It is certainly the principle of human knowledge: ". . . omnia quae ad scientiam cognoscimus, ratione cognoscimus." *De Lib Arb.*, II, xix, 50 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1268). Moreover, its peculiar function in human knowledge seems to be organization and unification: "Ego quodam meo motu interiore et occulto, ea quae discenda sunt possum discernere et connectere, et haec vis mea ratio vocatur. Quid autem discernedum est, nisi quod aut unum putatur et non est, aut certe non tam unum est quam putatur? Item, cur quid connectendum est, nisi ut unum fiat, quantum potest? Ergo et in discernendo et in connectendo, unum volo, et unum amo." *De Ordine*, II, xviii, 48 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1017). A still wider application of the unifying nature of the *ratio humana* is its influence in controlling the sense appetites: "Ideo ratio quae praesidet in mente, motus inferiores carnis, tanquam regnans et dominans frenare debet . . ." *Sermo VIII*, c. v, 6 (*PL*, Vol. XXXVIII, col. 70). This is parallel to the control exercised by the *ratio seminalis* over the appetites of lower beings.

Boyer, *L'Idée de vérité*, p. 59, emphasizes the link of the *ratio humana* with unity: "Augustin definissait la raison comme une tendance dont l'objet est l'unité en elle même. La raison distingue et unit: mais distinguer, c'est vouloir l'unité toute pure, et unir c'est vouloir tout entière." It may well be that unity should be most stressed when one tries to explain what Augustine meant by human reason; but a full understanding would certainly require that the connection of reason with such things as *number*, *modus*, and *form* be pointed out. A really adequate treatment of Augustine's use of *ratio* in general, or more particularly of *ratio hominis*, would involve a careful study of the use of the word *logos* by Augustine's Greek predecessors, especially Plotinus and the Stoics.

[88] This distinction is developed by Augustine in the twelfth book of the *De Trinitate* (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 997-1012).

[89] Cf. Bourke, *op. cit.*, p. 215; Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin*, p. 142.

[90] "In quadam quippe medietate posita est, infra se habens corporalem creaturam, supra se autem sui et corporis Creatorem." *Epist. CXL*, c. ii, 3 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIII, col. 359). Cf. Bourke, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

reason concerns itself with the more mutable order that is inferior to itself, we call it the inferior reason; and its rational knowledge on this level we call *science*.[91] If it turns its view to the immutable verities that are superior to itself, we say it is the superior reason; and its knowledge of the *rationes aeternae* we call *wisdom*.[92] Thus St. Augustine's distinction between science and wisdom, like Plato's distinction between opinion and science, is based on the distinction between two objects of knowledge, one changing and the other unchanging.[93]

Consistent seeking after wisdom will result in the soul becoming ever more formed and immutable; its *ratio* will become ever more like the *ratio hominis* in the mind of God.[94] This progressive formation of the soul requires two cooperating causes: God and man himself. On God's side, the formation of the soul is effected by "illumination."[95] This illumination applies, as we have already seen,

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[91] "Si ergo haec est sapientiae et scientiae recta distinctio, ut ad sapientiam pertineat aeternarum rerum cognitio intellectualis; ad scientiam vero, temporalium rerum cognitio rationalis: quid cui praeponendum sive postponendum sit, non est difficile judicare." *De Trin,* XII, xv, 25 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 1012).

[92] "Cette conception spécifiquement augustinienne des rapports de la science à la sagesse repose donc sur une double série d'équivalences parallèles qu'il faut garder présentes à la pensée pour comprendre les textes généralement fort complexes où elle s'exprime. D'une part, nous avons une connaissance de l'intellect ou de la raison supérieure, tournée vers les Idées divines, de l'ordre de la contemplation, fondée sur un acte de soumission à Dieu et béatifiante: la sagesse. D'autre part, nous avons une connaissance de la raison inférieure, tournée vers les choses sensibles, de l'ordre de l'action, fondée sur un acte d'avarice et dégradante: la science. Ces deux termes connotent donc dans l'augustinisme des significations morales et religieuses définies qui nous en rendent parfois difficile une exacte interprétation." Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin,* p. 148.

[93] ". . . ad sapientiam pertineat aeternarum rerum cognitio intellectualis; ad scientiam vero, temporalium rerum cognitio rationalis: . . ." *De Trin.,* XII, xv, 25 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 1012).

[94] Augustine does not say in so many words that a man becomes perfect by his *ratio* becoming conformed to the *ratio hominis* in the mind of God; yet it seems justifiable to say that such was his teaching. That there is, according to the Augustinian explanation of things, a *ratio aeterna hominis* is clear from passages such as *De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII,* q. xlvi, 2 (*PL,* Vol. XL, col. 30), where Augustine says that there are *rationes aeternae* of all creatures: ". . . hae rerum omnium creandarum creatarumve rationes in divina mente continentur." This same passage goes on to say of the *rationes aeternae:* ". . . quarum participatione fit ut sit quidquid est, quoquomodo est." This makes it clear that the *ratio* of a particular man participates in the eternal *ratio hominis.*

Even more to the point are sections such as *De Trin.,* VIII, ix, 13 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 960) where Augustine explains why we love virtuous men. "Et nisi hanc formam, quam semper stabilem atque incommutabilem cernimus, praecipue diligeremus, non ideo diligeremus illum, quia ejus vitam, cum in carne viveret, huic formae coaptatam et congruentem fuisse, fide retinemus." Cf. also *De Trin.,* IX, vi, 9 (*PL,* Vol. XLII, col. 966), and *De Vera Rel.,* c. xxvi, 49 (*PL,* Vol. XXXIV, col. 143), where Augustine gives a description of the steps towards beatitude.

[95] ". . . the effect of Divine Illumination is not only epistemological but is also ontological. In other words, by the influence of Divine Light, man's

to creation and also to knowledge and virtue. In knowledge, St. Augustine says that God illumines the soul, that Christ Himself is the light of the mind.[96] Whatever the precise nature of this illumination may be, it seems quite clear that it is some sort of communication of the divine intellectual perfection to the human mind.[97] St. Augustine expresses the same notion in another way by saying that the *rationes aeternae* in the divine mind are impressed upon the human reason.[98] In the moral order virtues are imprinted on the human soul by the immutable God.[99] What illumination really is, is the Platonic participation of sensibles in the ideas, applied to the orders of being, cognition, and morality.[100] For St. Augustine, true being, true knowledge, and true virtue are essentially a participation in the *rationes aeternae*.[101] This leads us to the in-

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soul is not only enabled to know truly; it is brought, by this action of spiritual conformation, to a more perfect existence." Bourke, *op cit.*, p. 226.

". . . the process of receiving form and illumination are one and the same . . . Creation of angelic nature involves an illumination which is at the same time *formation.* In this instance the ontological order and the order of enlightment coincide. For a pure spirit to know is to be. The angels and the soul of man are the subject of this 'direct' mode of creation." O'Toole, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[96] "Quis porro nos docet nisi stabilis veritas?" *Conf.*, XI, viii, 10 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 813). "Ille autem qui consulitur, docet, qui in interiore homine habitare dictus est Christus, id est incommutabilis Dei virtus atque sempiterna Sapientia; . . ." *De Magistro*, c. xi, 38 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1216).

[97] ". . . profecto facti sunt participes lucis aeternae, quod est ipsa incommutabilis Sapientia Dei . . ." *De Civ. Dei*, XI, ix, 9 (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 325.)

[98] ". . . creatura, quae contemplatione veritatis omnia tempora excedit, sed intellectualiter sibimet impressas ab incommutabili Dei sapientia rationes, tanquam intelligibiles locutiones . . ." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, I, ix, 17 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 252).

[99] "Verum tu in hac causa etsi ad scholam Pythagorae provoces vel Platonis, ubi eruditissimi atque doctissimi viri multo excellentiore caeteris philosophia nobilitati veras virtutes non esse dicebant, nisi quae menti quodam modo imprimuntur a forma illius aeternae immutabilisque substantiae, quod est Deus." *Contra Julianum Pelagianum*, IV, iii, 17 (*PL*, Vol. XLIV, col. 745).

[100] "Il y a donc, dans l'augustinisme, une illumination physique et une illumination morales comparables en tous points à l'illumination intellectualle, et qui repose sur les mêmes bases métaphysiques. Ce qui ne se suffit pas dans l'ordre de l'être, par la même, dans l'ordre de la connaissance, ne se suffit pas davantage dans l'ordre de l'action." Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin*, p. 158.

See *De Civ. Dei*, VIII, i (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 225), where St. Augustine links participation with illumination and says that this application of participation to the order of cognition is a doctrine of the Platonists. Cf. also *De Civ. Dei*, X, ii (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 279).

For the meaning of "Platonists" see *De Civ. Dei*, VIII, xii (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 237). Basing his statement largely on this passage in Augustine, Boyer in *Christianisme et néoplatonisme*, pp. 80-81, says: "Il entend donc par 'platoniciens' les philosophes de l'école d'Alexandrie, ceux qui dans l'histoire de la philosophie partent le nom de néo-platoniciens."

[101] "Comme notre vérité n'est qu'une participation de la Vérité et notre béatitude une participation de la Béatitude, de même aussi chaque homme ne devient verteux qu'en conformant son âme aux règles immuables et aux lumières des Vertus, qui vivent éternellement dans la Vérité et la Sagesse commune à tous les hommes." Gilson, *Introduction à l'ètude de S. Augustin*, p. 160.

teresting point (which we can merely mention) whether in St. Augustine there is any place for a distinction between formal and transcendental truth.[102]

This divine formation of the soul will only take place, however, if the soul turns itself to the illumination of divine Goodness.[103] In the conversion of superior reason to Truth, there somehow results, as we have seen, a contact of human reason with the eternal reasons. Not that man enjoys an immediate vision of the divine essence; that would be heaven on earth.[104] Rather, the eternal reasons have a normative influence on the superior reason, so that its judgments are in conformity with truth.[105] Universal knowledge, such as that of species, genera, and mathematical ratios, comes from the eternal reasons and is not derived from the individual things existing in the sense world.[106] Besides such speculative knowledge, this conversion to the eternal reasons enables the mind to make correct practical judgments because the mind sees in God the immutable form of righteousness that must be the ideal of its own striving after perfection.[107] In addition, the rules of conduct are seen in immutable Truth, and these immutable reasons thus lead men to perfection.[108]

What man must do to become more perfect is to embrace contemplation, which is the employment of superior reason in study-

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[102] This lack of distinction between the two forms of truth, which lack flows from the basic principles of Platonism, is criticized by St. Thomas, *ST*, I, 84, 4 ad 1.

[103] ". . . homo autem et secundum animam et secundum corpus mutabilis res est; nisi ad incommutabile bonum, quod est Deus, conversus substiterit, formari, ut justus beatusque sit, non potest." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, VIII, x, 23 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 381).

[104] "Intentioni animi subjacet, excepta incommutabilitate Trinitatis, quae quidem non subjacet, sed eminet potius; . . ." *De Lib. Arb.*, III, xxv, 75 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1308).

[105] "Ipsa vero forma inconcussae ac stabilis veritatis, et in qua fruerer homine bonum eum credens, et in qua consulo ut bonus sit, eadam luce incorruptibilis sincerissimaeque rationis et meae mentis aspectum, et illam phantasiae nubem, quam desuper cerno, cum eumdem hominem quem videram cogito, imperturbabili aeternitate perfundit . . . . Itaque de istis secundum illam judicamus, et illam cernimus rationalis mentis intuitu." *De Trin.*, IX, vi, 11 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 967). Cf. also: *Conf.*, VII, xvii, 23 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 745); *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxxi, 57 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 147); *De Trin.*, XII, ii, 2 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 999), and XII, xv, 24 (col. 1011).

[106] "Neque enim oculis corporeis multas mentes videndo, per similitudinem colligimus generalem vel specialem mentis humanae notitiam: sed intuemur inviolabilem veritatem, ex qua perfecte, quantum possumus, definiamus, non qualis sit uniuscujusque hominis mens, sed qualis esse sempiternis rationibus debeat." *De Trin.*, IX, vi, 9 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 966).

[107] ". . . in Deo conspicimus incommutabilem formam justitiae, secundum quam hominem vivere oportere judicamus." *De Trin.*, VIII, ix, 13 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 960). Cf. also *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxvi, 49 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 143).

[108] " . . . per ipsam speciem incommutabilis veritatis ad perfectionem plenissimam perducemur." *De Civ. Dei*, X, xxii (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col 300). Cf. also *De Lib. Arb.*, III, xvi, 46 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1293).

ing divine Truth.[109] This contemplation will lead to wisdom, to an ever-increasing similarity to Him who is Wisdom.[110] Man is justified by his conversion to the immutable, eternal good.[111] Not only does contemplation lead to justification: it is also the one way to blessedness, to happiness.[112] The steps towards ultimate happiness, as sketched in the *De Vera Religione*,[113] are so many varying degrees of approximation to the immutable reasons in the bosom of Truth. A wise man already possesses in this life a good share of immutable truth, and he directs his judgments in accord with it.[114] Complete culmination of this ascent to God will come only in heaven, where the very essence of eternal happiness will be the enjoyment that the blessed have in the possession of Him who is immutable Truth and Good.[115]

On the other hand, a man can turn away from this contemplation of divine things and devote his attention to the mutable things of the sense world. While the activity of the inferior reason, which is ordered not to wisdom but to action, is not bad in itself, it is bad when it involves the neglect of contemplation.[116] This aversion

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[109] ". . . homo autem, quantum ad ejus naturam, in qua eum Deus condidit, pertinet, bonum est quidem, sed non incommutabile ut Deus. Mutabile autem bonum, quod est post incommutabile bonum, melius bonum fit, cum bono incommutabili adhaeserit . . ." *De Gen ad Litt.*, VIII, xiv, 31 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 384.)

[110] ". . . animae tantum rationali et intellectuali datum est, ut ejus aeternitatis contemplatione perfruatur, atque afficiatur orneturque ex ea, aeternamque vitam possit mereri." *De Vera Rel.*, c. iii, 3 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 124).

In the seven steps towards beatitude given in *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxvi, 49 (*PL*, Vol. XXIV, col. 143), the fifth step is: "pacatam atque ex omni parte tranquillam, viventem in opibus et abundantia incommutabilis regni summae atque ineffabilis sapientiae."

[111] ". . . quia ergo Deus est incommutabile bonum, homo autem et secundum animam et secundum corpus mutabilis res est, nisi ad incommutabile bonum, quod Deus est, conversus substiterit, formari, ut justus beatusque sit, non potest." *De Gen. ad Litt.*, VIII, x, 23, (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 381).

"Toute la morale augustinienne est suspendue à cette doctrine de la vision finale et saturante de la Vérité." Boyer, *L'Idée de vérité*, p. 236.

[112] ". . . beatitudinem, quam recto proposito intellectualis natura desiderat; hoc est, ut et bono incommutabili, quod Deus est, sine ulla molestia perfruatur, et in eo se in aeternum esse mansuram . . ." *De Civ. Dei*, XI, xiii, (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 328). Cf. also *De Lib. Arb.*, II, xiii, 36 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1260), and II, xix, 52 (col. 1268).

[113] *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxvi, 49 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 143).

[114] "Constituamus ergo anima talem sapientem, cujus anima rationalis jam sit particeps incommutabilis aeternaeque veritatis, quam de omnibus suis actionibus consulat, nec aliquid omnino faciat, quod non in ea cognoverit esse faciendum, ut ei subditus eique obtemperans recte faciat." *De Trin*, III, iii, 8 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 872).

[115] ". . . ejus veritate incommutabili perfruuntur immortaliter beati." *De Civ. Dei*, X, xv (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 293).

Augustine says that his preference for Platonism is due to its doctrine that the immutable God is the end of man. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, X, i (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 277). See also Boyer, *Christianisme et néoplatonisme*, p. 118; also by the same author, *L'Idée de vérité*, p. 223.

from immutable Truth and conversion to the mutable world is for St. Augustine the essence of moral evil; this is sin.[117] Thus one of the problems that most perplexed St. Augustine—the problem of evil—was solved by him through the distinction between mutable and immutable. This turning away from the illuminating, formative influence of the eternal reasons results in a loss of form on the part of soul.[118] Turned away from God, it becomes unformed, foolish, and tends ever more and more towards nothingness.[119] However, low as it may fall, soul will always be above any body; for soul is a dweller in a realm to which body can never gain admittance, the realm of things that change only in time.

(To be continued)

Bernard J. Cooke, S.J.

St. Louis University

[116] "Sicut enim bona sunt omnia quae creavit Deus, ab ipsa rationali creatura usque ad infimum corpus, ita bene in his agit anima rationalis, si ordinem servet, et distinguendo, eligendo, pendendo subdat minora majoribus, corporalia spiritalibus, inferiora superioribus, temporalia sempiternis, ne superiorum neglectu et appetitu inferiorum (quoniam hinc fit ipsa deterior) et se et corpus suum mittat in pejus, sed potius ordinata caritate se et corpus suum convertat in melius." *Epist.* CXL, c. ii, 4 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIII, col. 539).

[117] ". . . omnia peccata hoc uno genere contineri, cum quisque avertitur a divinis vereque manentibus, et ad mutabilia atque incerta convertitur." *De Lib. Arb.*, I, xvi, 35 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, col. 1240). Cf. also II, xix, 53 (col. 1269).

[118] "Incorporali vero illi aeterno et incommutabili tanto est anima hominis dissimilior, quanto rerum temporalium mutabiliumque cupidior." *De Civ. Dei*, IX, xvii (*PL*, Vol. XLI, col. 271).

In a sense the turning of soul to bodies makes it itself share in the mutability of time and place. "Loca offerunt quod amemus, tempora surripiunt quod amamus et relinquunt in anima turbas phantasmatum quibus in aliud atque aliud cupiditas incitetur." *De Vera Rel.*, c. xxxv, 65 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 151). *Cf. Boyer, L'Idée de vérité*, p. 242.

[119] "Vita ergo voluntario defectu deficiens ab eo qui eam fecit, et cujus essentia fruebatur, et colens contra Dei legem frui corporibus, quibus eam Deus praefecit, vergit ad nihilum; et haec est nequitia." *De Vera Rel.*, c. xi, 21 (*PL*, Vol. XXXIV, col 131). Cf. also *Contra Secundinum Manichaeum*, I, xviii (*PL*, Vol. XLII, col. 595).

ALTERATION, THE WAY TO GENERATION AND CORRUPTION

IT WAS just as evident to St. Thomas as it is to us that accidental changes precede substantial change. Frequently he affirms that alteration is the way to generation and corruption.[1] Such a simple statement, however, gives rise to a rather perplexing problem. Does St. Thomas mean to say that one and the same physical action is alterative and generative? Or does he say that a generating substance first alters another substance and then at the end of the altering process places a second action which educes the substantial form? Suarez, for example, defends the view that generation and alteration are distinct actions.[2] Because generation is really and essentially distinct from alteration, he concludes that it is also a new and distinct action.[3] According to him no one can escape this conclusion by saying that generation results from alteration as accidents emanate from substance. For such an explanation is impossible, especially if we suppose that the accidents which existed in the old substance do not remain in the new. If at the instant of generation neither alteration nor its terminus remain, how can substantial form result from it?[4]

John of St. Thomas comes to the same conclusion as Suarez.[5] He particularly emphasizes the fact that a new substance cannot result from alteration or from the quality produced by it through a process of emanation. He cites two texts from St. Thomas which seem to

[1] *De Mixtione Elementorum* (ed. Parma), XVI, 353: ". . . alteratio est via ad generationem et corruptionem." Cf. *ST*, I, 105. 2; *ST*, I-II, 113, 7 ad. 1; *Quodlibet. VII*, a. 9.

[2] *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, XVIII, sec. 2, Nos. 15-20 (ed. Vivès).

[3] *Ibid.*, No. 18: "Unde tandem argumentor a priori, quia generatio est realiter essentialiterque distincta a tota alteratione praecedenti; ergo est per se propria et nova actio."

[4] *Ibid.*: ". . . si ergo in instante generationis, neque alteratio, nec terminus ejus manet, quomodo ex illa resultare potest substantialis forma?"

[5] *Phil. Nat.*, II, 1. 3 (ed. Vivès): "Nihilominus oppositum dicendum est: Generationem esse actionem distinctam ab alteratione, nec substantiam resultare ex alteratione vel ex qualitate per illam producta sicut propriae passiones resultant ex essentia, sed per veram efficientiam produci distinctam ab efficientia qua ipsa qualitas per alterationem producitur, nec D. Thomas unquam dixit substantiam ipsam resultare ex alteratione, vel ex qualitate per illam producta, sed quod generatio (id est, actio ipsa) est terminus alterationis, si autem substantia resultaret ex ipsa, non diceretur generatio esse terminus alterationis, sed res ipsa genita, si ergo generatio ipsa est terminus alterationis, ergo est distincta actio ab ea."

[6] *CG*, III, 69; *ST*, II-II, 164. 1 ad 7.

[7] A. Goudin, O.P., *Philosophia Juxta Inconcussa Tutissimaque D. Thomae Dogmata*, ed. Vincent Marreddu, O.P. (reprint of the 10th ed. [Paris, 1692]; Urbeveteri, 1859), III, 197: "Probatur ejus ratione, quam habet Quaest. de Anima, art. 12. Nulla creaturae actio primo et immediate ter-

say that generation and alteration are distinct actions.[6]

Against Suarez and John of St. Thomas, others maintain that generation is not an action distinct from alteration. Goudin, for instance, draws his principal argument for the existence of one alterative-generative action from St. Thomas's *Quaestio De Anima,* a. 12.[7] Since the immediate principle of corporeal activity is an accident the terminus of its activity must also be an accident. Hence a body cannot act directly on the substance of another but must produce substantial change through accidental change.

In this discussion, as in so many others, both sides quote St. Thomas. This difference of opinion among the commentators seems to arise from a failure to distinguish between the various meanings of the terms alteration and generation. Alteration may refer to the actual altering process or to the terminus of that process. Likewise, generation designates either the generating process or the terminus of that process. If one merely considers alteration and generation as termini of motion, one must say that they are really and essentially distinct, because alteration implies a change in quality, while generation implies a change in substantial form. Since action always accompanies motion or change, one must also say there are two distinct actions. But if one views alteration and generation as motions leading to the eduction of new qualities and of a new substantial form, he will not find it easy to determine whether there are two distinct motions or whether there is but one complex motion ending in two distinct termini. Because some commentators turned their attention too exclusively to alteration and generation as the termini of a motion or change, they overlooked the further question whether these distinct termini demand two distinct actions or whether one action suffices. There is, therefore, no difference of opinion with regard to the essential distinction between alteration and generation considered as termini of a change. But the question at issue now is whether one physical motion or action can terminate in alteration and generation or whether two actions are necessary. How does St. Thomas answer this question?

At times he explicitly calls alteration generation. Because alteration has two termini, substantial form and quality, it can be called alteration, generation, and corruption.[8] In the last instant of altera-

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minatur ad substantiam; sed immediate ad accidens, et eo mediante aliquando ad substantiam cum eo conjunctam; atqui si generatio esset actio distincta ab alteratione, per se primo et immediate terminaretur ad substantiam: ergo non est actio distincta. Minor per se nota est.. Probatur major. Terminus immediatus actionis correspondet ejus immediato principio; quodlibet enim agit in sibi simile; sed immediatum agendi principium in creaturis est accidens; nulla enim creata substantia est immediate operativa, ut supra ostendimus: ergo immediatus actionis creatae terminus non est substantia sed accidens."

[8] *In VI Physic.,* lect. 8, No. 14 (ed. Leon.): "Et quia motus denominatur

tion, the form begins to be in matter.[9] One should note that substantial form and not another action is called the terminus of alteration. If the eduction of a substantial form were the terminus of an action distinct from alteration, how could it be called the terminus of alteration?

Again St. Thomas speaks interchangeably of the new substance's being produced in the last instant of generation or in the last instant of alteration.[10] He could not say this unless he believed that the altering process is also generative.

If one examines St. Thomas's doctrine closely he will notice that it is impossible to speak of a generating action distinct from an altering process. Because a created substance cannot act directly on another substance, it must act through its accidents as instruments.[11] But as instruments, the accidents must simultaneously exercise their own proper activity and their instrumental activity.[12] The only way, therefore, a substance can educe a new substantial form is to alter another substance to such an extent that the old form is corrupted and the new is generated. As the altering process is the action of accidents which are the instruments of substance, it can terminate in substantial form.

If one tries to say that the accidents of a generating substance first alter another substance and then, after alteration has terminated, educe a new substantial form, he must also say that an instrument can exercise its instrumental activity apart from its own activity. But this is impossible. Hence accidents, as instruments of substance, must simultaneously exercise an alterative-generative activity.

Perhaps the reason why some have failed to understand how one and the same physical action can be alterative and generative is that they did not reflect sufficiently on the intimate union existing between substance and accident in being and activity. An accident does not first exercise its own activity and then its instrumental activity. Just as the existence of an accident at one and the same time be-

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a termino ad quem . . . , ipsum alterari, quia habet duos terminos, scilicet formam substantialem et qualitatem, dupliciter nominatur; quia potest dici et alterari, et fieri et corrumpi."

[9] *De Pot.*, 3. 9 ad 9: "Forma vero non incipit esse in materia nisi in ultimo instanti alterationis." Cf. *Quodlibet. VII*, a. 9.

[10] *In de Memoria et Reminiscentia*, lect. 4 (ed. Vivès): ". . . semper in ultimo instanti generationis verum est dicere illud esse cujus est generatio, sicut in ultimo instanti generationis ignis, ignis jam est." Cf. *ST*, III, 75. 3.

[11] *Quaest. de An.*, a. 12c: "Quia enim agens naturale in generatione agit transmutando materiam ad formam, quod quidem fit secundum quod materia primo disponitur ad formam, et tandem consequitur formam, secundum quod generatio est terminus alterationis; necesse est quod ex parte agentis id quod immediate agit, sit forma accidentalis correspondens dispositioni materiae; . . ."

[12] *ST*, I, 45. 5c: "Quia causa secunda instrumentalis non participat actionem causae superioris, nisi in quantum per aliquid sibi proprium dispositive operatur ad effectum principalis agentis."

longs to the substance and to the accident,[13] so the consequent activity is at one and the same time under different aspects the activity of the substance and of the accident. St. Thomas pithily states this truth: ". . . non calor sed calidum agit."[14] An accident cannot have an independent activity. It has even less independence than an instrument in the strict sense. At least a tool does not depend on the user for its very existence. But even a tool does not exercise its own activity except insofar as it is used. This is more emphatically true of an accident. Hence one cannot say that the accidents of a generating substance first produce dispositions in the substance which is to be changed and then as instruments educe the new form. Their action throughout the changing process is alterative and generative. Not that the form is educed gradually; but the qualitative changes are directed towards the eduction of this form which will come to be in matter at the end of the process. Because such is the nature of this kind of alteration, it is not surprising that its terminus is a new substantial form in this matter.

Against this interpretation some cite a text from the *Summa Contra Gentiles*[15] which seems to say that two distinct actions occur in generation. Just as accidental forms have their actions, so all the more a substantial form has its own action. But its action is not to dispose matter because this is done through alteration, for which the accidental forms suffice. Therefore the substantial form of the generator is the source of the action introducing a substantial form into the substance generated.

Goudin succinctly and clearly solves this difficulty.[16] The altering process, considered as terminating in an accident, is not the proper action of substantial form; but considered as generative and tending towards the production of substantial form as its ultimate term, it is the proper action of substantial form.

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[13] *De Ente et Essentia,* c. 7, ed. Boyer (Rome, 1933): "Definitionem autem habent incompletam, quia non possunt definiri nisi ponatur subjectum in eorum definitione; et hoc ideo est, quia non habent esse per se absolutum a subjecto; sed, sicut ex forma et materia relinquitur esse substantiale quando componuntur, ita ex accidente et subjecto relinquitur esse accidentale quando accidens subjecto advenit."

[14] *Quaest. de An.,* a. 1c; cf. *ST,* II-II, 58. 2; *ST,* I, 75. 2.

[15] *CG,* III, 69: "Si igitur formae accidentales quae sunt in rebus corporalibus habent proprias, actiones, multo magis forma substantialis habet aliquam propriam actionem. Non est autem ejus propria actio disponere materiam: quia hoc fit per alterationem, ad quam sufficiunt formae accidentales. Igitur forma substantialis generantis est principium actionis ut forma substantialis introducatur in generatum."

[16] *Op. cit.,* III, 198-99: "Alteratio non est actio propria formae substantialis, *praecise ut terminatur ad accidens,* concedo; ut est etiam generativa, et se extendit ad formam substantialem, ut *ad ultimum terminum,* nego. Itaque, ut dixi, eadem actio producit dispositionem ultimam, et forman eam consequentem. Sub primo munere dicitur *alteratio,* et propria est accidentis actio. At sub secundo dicitur *generatio,* et sic actio formae substantialis."

This solution is in accord with St. Thomas's doctrine.[17] Sometimes a motion has only one *terminus ad quem;* sometimes, however, there are two *termini ad quem,* of which one is ordered to the other, as is the case in the alteration of the elements, where one terminus is a necessary disposition, while the other is substantial form itself.

Another difficulty seems to prevent alterative action from being at the same time generative. Since the altering process occurs in the substance which is being corrupted, it must disappear with the corruption of its subject.[18] Hence there must be a distinct generative action whose subject is the new substance. An example will help to solve this problem. If I want to repair a roof, I must first put up a ladder and then climb up. My climbing is the reason for my presence on the roof, even though that climbing necessarily ceased at the instant I arrived on the roof. Similarly in substantial change, an alterative-generative action is the reason for the presence of this form and these accidents even though it ceases to exist at the instant of change. Just as my presence on the roof necessarily terminates my climbing, so the presence of a new form with its accidents necessarily terminates an alterative-generative action.

The principal argument against the interpretation just given rests on the assumption that such an explanation makes the eduction of a new form the resultant of alteration. But such an origin is proper to accidents alone and supposes that both exist at the same instant. Since alteration ceases to exist at the instant of generation, the new form cannot result from it, but requires a distinct generative action.[19]

This argument supposes that one who affirms there is but one alterative-generative action must also say that a new form results from alteration as accidents result from substance. If that were true, then Suarez, John of St. Thomas, and their followers would hold an impregnable position. But one does not have to say that a new form results from an alterative-generative action as accidents emanate from a substance. No one, for example, says that a new location results from locomotion as accidents emanate from a substance. Yet a new location does not call for an action distinct from the one causing locomotion. Neither does the eduction of a form require an action distinct from alteration. Because alteration is also

[17] *De Ver.,* 9. 3c: "Similiter etiam terminus *ad quem* quandoque est unus tantum, ut in dealbatione terminus *ad quem* est albedo; quandoque vero sunt duo termini *ad quem,* quorum unus ad alium ordinatur, sicut patet in alteratione elementorum, cujus terminus unus est dispositio quae est necessitas, alius autem ipsa forma substantialis." Cf. *Quodlibet. VII,* a. 9; *De Virt. in Comm., a.* 1 ad 8; *In IV Sent.,* d. 12, 1. 2. sol. 2.

[18] John of St. Thomas, *Op. cit.,* II, 1. 5: "Cum ergo generatio, in quantum actio, sit accidens, oportet quod pro subjecto inhaesionis, et sustentationis habeat compositum, et non solum materiam primam, licet illa sit principium *quo* recipiendi, et subjectum etiam mutationis, ut dictum est."

[19] *Ibid.,* II, 1. 3.

the action of substance and as such is primarily ordered to the eduction of substantial form, its proper and final terminus is substantial form. It need not and cannot exist together with its terminus, any more than local motion can exist at its terminus.

To educe a new form, therefore, one substance must first alter the properties of another substance to such an extent that the old form can no longer exist. The process of alteration is also called generation because it is directed towards the eduction of a substantial form. The immediate effect of alteration is the production of previous dispositions. At the terminus of the altering process these previous dispositions will give way to ultimate dispositions and a new substantial form.

THEODORE WOLF, S.J.

Mount St. Michael's
Spokane, Washington

THE PROBLEM OF ACTION IN THE COMMENTARY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE PHYSICS OF ARISTOTLE

PART II

IN PART I we asserted that motion is the act of a being in potency in so far as it is in potency, and that this motion implies a material subject, two termini, and a being in act as agent. Hence, we concluded, motion as from the agent is *action* and as in the patient is *passion*. This *action* is properly transient action, which is a perfection of the patient rather than of the agent. We then examined the meaning of immanent action. Now we must return to the original problem: it must be proved in what way transient action is in the patient and in what way it can be said to be in the agent. The most important Thomistic text on this subject is found in the commentary on the *Physics* of Aristotle, the third book, the fifth lecture. After outlining the solution given in this work, we shall compare it with other texts that either substantiate it or present certain problems that must be settled.

MOTION AND ACTION IN THE *PHYSICS*

St. Thomas begins the third book of his commentary with a discussion of motion. Nature is the principle of motion; hence we must analyze motion and its concomitants: the infinite, place, vacuum, and time. Being may be divided into potency and act or into the ten genera. Now relation is numbered among these genera, and motion in some way pertains to this genus of relation in so far as the mover is referred to the mobile. Since relation has the weakest *to be*—*debillissimum esse*—it must be founded on some other accident. Relation can be founded on quantity, inasmuch as quantity can be the measure of something extrinsic; or on action, inasmuch as the agent passes its action into another. Or relation can be based on passion. Motion is in the genus of that which has the motion, since as imperfect act it may be reduced to the genus of the perfected term.[1]

In order to define motion, we must recall that a thing may be in act or in potency or midway between these two. In the first two instances a thing is not moved. Hence motion must be an imperfect act. Motion has the *ratio* of an imperfect act inasmuch as it is compared to further act as potency and to the original *terminus a quo* as act. Thus: "Motus est entelechia, idest actus, existentis in potentia secundum quod huiusmodi." If an agent is acted upon at

[1] *In III Phys.*, lect. 1.

the same time that it acts, it is acted upon precisely in so far as it is a material thing in potency and not in so far as it is an agent.[2]

St. Thomas further explains how motion is an imperfect act. If it is difficult to understand such an act, we must realize that we cannot for that reason reject it, for it is true that motion is a fact.[3]

Motion is the act of the mobile in so far as it is being moved. This follows from the very definition of motion. Every finite mover is moved, since such a mover is first only a potential mover and so must be put in act before it can act. *To move* is to act so that something is moved: "movere est agere ad hoc quod aliquid moveatur." Motion, however, is not the act of the mover, but of the mobile. If the mover is also moved, it is not in so far as it is mover that it is moved. Each thing acts in so far as it is in act; and since each thing is in act through its form, it follows that the form is the principle of motion. Hence to be a mover belongs to a thing in so far as it is in act: "et sic movere competit alicui inquantum habet formam, per quam est in actu."

Since the act of anything is in that of which it is the act, it is clear that motion must be in the mobile. In some way it is also the act of the mover. The mover is called such precisely because of the power that it has to produce motion: "ex parte moventis motivum dicitur secundum potentiam, inquantum scilicet potest movere." Thus the mover is called mover in so far as it acts; the thing moved is so named in so far as it is moved; but that which the mover causes by acting is the same as that which the moved receives by suffering. Although it is the same space, the ascent of the stairs differs from the descent because of the diversity of principle and term. This analogy can be applied to the mover and the moved. For motion, inasmuch as it proceeds from the mover into the mobile, is the act of the mover; inasmuch as it is in the mobile from the mover, it is the act of the mobile: "nam motus secundum quod procedit a movente in mobile, est actus moventis, secundum autem quod est in mobili a movente, est actus mobilis."[4]

ACTION AND PASSION

St. Thomas considers at length the meaning of action and passion.[5] The act of the agent is called action; that of the patient, passion:

[2] *Ibid.*, lect. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, lect. 3. Cf. MS.

[4] *Ibid.*, lect. 4. It may be remarked here that in the fifth book St. Thomas will show that motion is not in the genus of relation. (Cf. lectio 3.) For motion cannot be in a subject without a change in that subject, but this is not true of relation. A new relation follows after motion. Nor is motion in the genus of action or passion: "Actio enim et passio non differunt subiecto a motu, sed addunt aliquam rationem."

[5] The following paragraphs will be a paraphrase of *In III Phys.*, lect. 5. This lecture is a commentary on Aristotle, *Physica* iii. 3. 202a. 21 to 206b, 30.

"et actus quidem activi vocatur actio; actus vero passivi vocatur passio." The work and end of anything is its act and perfection. Now the work and end of the agent is action, and that of the patient is passion. Therefore *actio* is the act of the agent, and *passio* is the act of the patient.

As it is manifest that action and passion are motion, the question that remains to be answered is whether action and passion are one and the same motion or different motions. If they are different motions, they must both be in some subject; either both are in the patient, or one is in the agent and one in the patient. In that case, the one in the agent would be action, and the one in the patient passion. It cannot be said that if there are two motions both are in the agent, for it has already been demonstrated that motion is in the thing moved.

Now if we should assert that action is in the agent and passion in the patient, we should be forced to admit that motion is in the mover as such, for it has been proved that action is motion. Hence it would follow either that every mover is moved or that something that has motion is not moved, conclusions that are both absurd.

But if we assume that action and passion as two motions are both in the patient as the thing moved, two difficulties arise. First, if action is the act of the agent but is not in the agent, then it follows that the proper act of a thing is not in that of which it is the act. Further, the patient in one and the same respect would be moved by two motions. Hence there would be two changes resulting in only one effect, which is an impossibility.

DIFFICULTIES

But if it be supposed that action and passion are only one motion, four difficulties can be presented against the supposition. First, one and the same act would belong to two things that are different in species. For action and passion and agent and patient differ in species. Secondly, it would seem that action must be the same as passion; and teaching, which is from the teacher, the same with the thing taught, which is in the learner. Thirdly, *to act* would be the same as *to be passive,* and *to teach* the same as *to learn.* Fourthly and finally, each one teaching would necessarily learn, and each agent would necessarily be a patient.

It is manifest from what has been established previously that action and passion are not two motions but one and the same motion. And thus it is clear that motion in so far as it is from the agent is called "action," and in so far as it is in the patient it is called "passion." Hence most of the difficulties that followed from supposing action and passion to be two motions are not pertinent. One difficulty still must be answered: how can the agent's act be in another

and still be the act of the agent? Thus there are five difficulties that remain to be solved: the one just mentioned and the four that were proposed if it be proved that action and passion are one motion.

To the first objection we may answer that it is not contradictory that the act of one thing be in another. For example, teaching is the act of the teacher, but nevertheless it terminates in another, the learner. Thus the act is the agent's as *from* it and yet is *in* the patient that receives it. It would imply a contradiction only if the act of one thing, in the same respect that it is this thing's act, were in another thing: "Esset autem inconveniens si actus unius eo modo quo est actus eius, esset in alio."

In order to solve the difficulty of how motion can be the act of two things, we must recall that nothing prevents one act from being from two things, if it be one only *secundum rem* and not one and the same thing *secundum rationem*. Thus motion is the act of the agent as from it but the act of the patient as in it.

St. Thomas answers the last three objections in reverse order. First, to the objection that *agere* and *pati* are the same he replies that if two things are equal to a third thing they are equal to each other only if they are equal to the third thing in every respect, both according to reality and according to the way they are considered: "Non enim oportet quod omnia eadem conveniant iis quae sunt quocumque modo idem; sed solum illis quae sunt idem subiecto vel re et ratione." Therefore as *to act* and *to suffer* do not have the same *ratio*, whatever pertains to one of them cannot be said to pertain necessarily to the other, even though they are both the same motion.

It does not follow, either, that to teach and to learn are identical, even though the teaching and the thing taught are the same. For "teaching" and the "thing taught" are abstract. But "to teach" and "to learn" are concrete; and hence they are referred to the two ends or terms, from which are taken the diverse *rationes* of action and passion. Although in the abstract the distance between two points is the same, "from here to there" is not the same as "from there to here" in the concrete.

Neither does it follow that action and passion are identical because they share a common motion. For the motion according to one *ratio* is "action" and according to another is "passion."

> Motus autem dicitur actio secundum quod est actus agentis ut ab hoc; dicitur autem passio secundum quod est actus patientis ut in hoc et sic patet quod licet motus sit idem moventis et moti, propter hoc quod abstrahit ab utroque ratione, tamen actio et passio differunt propter hoc, quod has diversas rationes in sua significatione includunt.

Therefore, since motion abstracts from action and passion, motion is in neither of these predicaments.

However there are still two points to be settled. Since action and passion are one motion and differ from it only by a certain

consideration, how can they be said to be two distinct predicaments? And if motion is either action or passion, motion ought not be reduced to the genus of substance, quantity, quality, or place—as has been claimed—but should be placed in the predicament of action or passion.

ACTION AND PASSION: DISTINCT PREDICAMENTS

To show how action and passion are distinct predicaments, it is necessary to point out that being is not univocally divided into the predicaments, as a genus is divided into its inferiors; but rather the divisions are made according to the different modes of being. The modes of being are proportionate to the modes of predication. Thus when we predicate one thing of another, we say that this is that. Hence the ten genera of being are called the ten "predicaments."[6]

Now there are three ways of predicating. First, something may be predicated of a subject that pertains to its essence: thus is had the predicament *substance.* Secondly, we may predicate something that is not of the essence of the subject but yet inheres in that subject; and if this be on the part of matter, we have *quantity;* if on the part of form, *quality;* or if the predicate implies reference of the subject to another thing, there is the predicament of *relation.* The third manner of predication is had when something extrinsic is predicated of another by way of extrinsic denomination. This latter kind of predication can be found to happen either in all things or only in a way that is peculiar to man. Commonly, a subject is denominated by something extrinsic, either as a cause or measure: as a thing is caused or measured by an extrinsic thing. Inasmuch as something is denominated by an acting cause, there is had the predicament of *passion;* for "to be a patient" is nothing other than to receive something from an agent. But if the acting cause be denominated by the effect, we have the predicament of *action;* for action is the act of an agent in another.[7] In regard to extrinsic measures, we have the predicaments *when, where,* and *posture.*

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[6] To consider and solve the nature of action, it is necessary to consider at length how action can be said to be a distinct predicament.

[7] "Sic igitur secundum quod aliquid denominatur a causa agente, est praedicamentum passionis, nam pati nihil est aliud quam suscipere aliquid ab agente: secundum autem quod e converso, denominatur causa agens ab effectu, est praedicamentum actionis, nam actio est actus ab agente in aliud." *Ibid.;* No. 15.

In enumerating the categories in another place, St. Thomas asserts that the measure of a thing may be wholly outside it, as the category of habit. Or the denomination may be had by something that is partially outside the subject. He explains action and passion thus: "Alio modo ut id a quo sumitur praedicamentum, secundum aliquid sit in subiecto, de quo praedicatur. Et si quidem secundum principium, sic praedicatur ut agere. Nam actionis principium in subjecto est. Si vero secundum terminum, sic praedicabitur ut in pati. Nam passio in subjectum patiens terminatur." *In V Meta.* lect. 9.

Finally, there is a special predicament that pertains to man: *habit*.

Therefore it is clear that although the motion be one, the predicaments of action and passion are distinct, in so far as the predicamental denominations come from distinct exterior things. For the agent, from which as from the exterior is taken the predicament passion, is distinct from the patient, by which the agent is denominated.

In regard to the second difficulty that was proposed—namely, that motion should be in the categories of action or passion instead of being reduced to the genera of substance, quantity, quality, and place—St. Thomas solves it thus: the *ratio* of motion is completed not only by that which pertains to motion in reality but also according to the manner in which it is understood. In reality motion signifies only an *actus imperfectus*. Thus we may consider motion merely as it is an imperfect act without any reference to its terms. In so far as motion denotes only an imperfect act in reality, it is placed by reduction in that genus in which the motion terminates; for the imperfect is always reduced to the perfect. Thus motion in reality is placed in the genus of substance, quantity, quality, or place. But in so far as we apprehend motion as a certain medium between two terms, there is implied the *ratio* of cause and effect: for, in order that something be reduced from potency to act, there is required some acting cause. And it is only according to this consideration of motion as implying cause and effect that it pertains to the predicament of action or of passion; for these two predicaments are taken according to *ratio* of the acting cause and the *ratio* of the effect, as we have said. But it is not according to this consideration that motion is reduced to one of the ten genera, and this is why motion is not in the predicament of action or of passion.

SOME TEXTS IN AGREEMENT WITH *PHYSICS*

In the preceding section we have shown how St. Thomas defines action and passion and clarifies their relation to motion. However, certain difficulties yet remain to be settled. Is action distinct from motion and passion by a rational distinction only? How can action —if it be in the patient—be truly said to be the agent's act? Does action in any way imply something in the agent? Finally, what relation does action establish in the agent, and how can the agent acquire a new relation without being changed? None of these problems has been sufficiently answered. In order to indicate the means of solving these issues, we must give a more penetrating analysis of action, passion, and relation.

In discussing active potency, St. Thomas asserts that this potency's *complementum* is in that which is made or produced.[8] That is, in

[8] Cf. *De Ver.*, 14. 3.

the active power that results in transient action the result of that action is in the patient, in the thing being reduced to act. We have proved that this does not mean that the act of the power that reduces the power to be in act is in the patient. Rather, this act is in the agent, for a thing must be in act before it can act; but the result of the exercise of the *to act* is in the patient. For *to act* is precisely to exercise some action. Thus this *action* is not the perfection of the operator but of the thing made.[9]

In the *Summa Contra Gentiles,* St. Thomas reaffirms that action and passion are one motion:

> Nihil enim inconveniens est moventis et moti, quamvis secundum esse diversorum, esse eundem actum; nam motus est idem quod actus moventis sicut a quo est, moti autem sicut in quo est. . . . Praeterea, licet motus sit communis actus moventis et moti, tamen alia operatio est facere motum et recipere motum; unde et duo praedicamenta ponuntur *facere* et *pati.*[10]

Since that which is attributed to something as from it and as proceeding into another does not make a composition with the former, action does not form a composite with the agent: "Quod autem attribuitur ut ab eo in aliud procedens non facit compositionem cum eo, sicut nec actio cum agente."[11] Thus, St. Thomas concludes, the subject is not changed by its exercise of action. ". . . quod non est motus secundum actionem nisi metaphorice et improprie . . .; quod non esset si . . . actio significaret aliquid in subiecto manens."[12] Here we find a substantiation of the principle that the action is in the patient. Indeed St. Thomas would seem to be asserting that action, even as an accident, is in no way in the agent, since the action does not form a composition with the agent.[13]

He repeats that action and passion are the same motion but that since they both imply something further they can not be identified with each other. This *respectus,* which they both imply, serves to distinguish them.[14]

Truly, action denotes nothing except "motus ut ab hoc," that is motion plus relation; for, if the motion be removed, there remains nothing but relation: "Remoto igitur motu, actio nihil aliud importat quam ordinem originis, secundum quod a causa aliqua vel principio procedit in quod est a principio."[15] However, it still remains to be

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[9] Cf. *CG,* I, 100; II, 1.
[10] *CG,* II, 57.
[11] *De Pot.,* 7. 8.
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] Thus he says that "actio perficit operatum, et non operantem." And, he concludes, "Unde est in operato sicut actio et perfectio eius, non autem in operante." *In IX Meta.,* lect. 8.
[14] "Unde ibidem dicit quod licet actio sit idem motus, similiter actio et passio, non tamen sequitur quod actio et passio sunt idem; quia in actione importatur respectus ut a quo est motus in mobili, in passione vero ut qui est ab alio." *ST,* I, 28. 3 ad 1.
[15] *ST,* I, 14. 1 ad 2. And, again: "Sed cum actio et passio conveniant in

shown that this relation posits no change in the agent.

In regard to transient action, moreover, we can assert that the action is not the same as the *to be* of the agent, for the former is extrinsic to the agent: "De prima ergo actione [transient] manifestum est quod non potest esse ipsum esse agentis, nam esse agentis significatur intra ipsum, actio autem talis est effluxus in actum ab agente."[16]

Thus these texts emphasize that action is motion as from the agent. Action is the perfection of the patient, not of the agent, and differs from motion and passion by a certain *respectus*. Hence the agent is in no way changed by the action, for the action does not form a composition with the agent. These references indicate that through the whole period of his writing, St. Thomas held that the action is in the patient and that it denotes only a relation to the agent. (The meaning of this relation will be considered later.)

TEXTS IN DISAGREEMENT WITH *PHYSICS*

But there remain certain texts, not as yet cited, which seemingly do not agree with the above doctrine. At least some explanation is required as to how they can be reconciled with the thesis put forth in the *Physics*.

St. Thomas declares in the *Sentences*, for example, that in transient action:

> In talibus actio est recepta in eo quod fit, per modum passionis, secundum quod motus est in moto ut in subiecto: et ideo in talibus est invenire actionem in re agente, et passionem in re patiente.[17]

At times he asserts that action is a certain "exigentiam rei cuius est actio."[18] This "flowing forth," of course, does not mean that something leaves the agent in the sense that the agent suffers any loss. It is merely a way of expressing the agent's causal influence on another, and therefore adds nothing new to the definition of action as given above.

A more difficult passage to interpret is this:

> Cum actio sit in agente, et passio in patiente, non potest esse idem numero accidens quod est actio, et quod est passio, cum unum accidens non possit esse in diversis subiectis. . . . Sed quia eorum differentia non est nisi penes terminos, scilicet agens et patiens, et motus abstrahit ab utroque termino; ideo motus significatur ut sine differentia; et propter hoc dicitur, quod motus est unus.[19]

There are other texts to support this. Thus St. Thomas asserts that: "Actio quae non est substantia agentis inest ei sicut accidens subiecto;

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substantia motus, et differant solum secundum habitudines diversas . . . oportet quod subtracto motu, non remaneat nisi diversae habitudines." *ST*, I, 45. 2 ad 2; cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.

[16] *ST*, I, 54. 2.

[17] *In I Sent.*, d. 40, 1. 1 ad 1.

[18] *In II Sent.*, d. 9, 1. 2.

[19] *In II Sent.*, d. 40, 1. 4 ad 1.

unde et actio inter novem praedicamenta accidentis computatur."[20] But if it be in the agent as an accident, will it not be there as a certain perfection of the agent?

When St. Thomas declares that the "actio agentis in patiente recepta est actus agentis et formae, aut aliqua inchoatio formae in ipso,"[21] he means that the *inchoatio formae* is the imperfect act in the patient, which is a similitude of the perfection possessed by the agent. At least this is how Ferrara interprets this passage; hence it does not mean that action is in the agent as a form.

St. Thomas points out that as relation is something inhering, so also action is in some way in the agent:

> Et ita relatio est aliud inhaerens, licet non ex hoc ipso quod est relatio; sicut et actio ex hoc quod est actio, consideratur ut ab agente; inquantum vero est accidens, consideratur ut in subiecto agente.[22]

How can this be reconciled with the text that action does not make a composition with the agent?

The agent has a relation to the patient in so far as the action is a certain good accruing to the agent. But this does not mean that the action is a good to the agent after the manner of an intrinsic perfection. This passage demonstrates this:

> Agentia autem, sive moventia, vel etiam causae, aliquando habent ordinem ad patientem vel mota vel causata, inquantum scilicet in ipso effectu vel passione vel motu inductis attenditur quoddam bonum et perfectio moventis vel agentis; sicut patet in agentibus univocis quae per actionem suae speciei similitudinem inducunt, et per consequens esse perpetuum propriae speciei, secundum quod est possibile conservat. Patet hoc etiam idem in omnibus aliis quae mota movent vel agunt vel causant; nam ex ipso suo motu ordinantur ad effectus producendos: et similiter in omnibus in quibus quodcumque bonum causae provenit ex effectu.[23]

Thus when St. Thomas says that "actio . . . est quaedam perfectio proprie agentis."[24] he means in the order of final cause.

Once again he compares action with relation:

> Unde dicendum quod, nihil prohibet aliquid esse inhaerens quod tamen non significatur ut inhaerens; sicut etiam actio non significatur ut in agente. Et similiter licet ad aliquid non significatur ut inhaerens, tamen oportet ut sit inhaerens.[25]

It may be noted that the references to action as in the subject are from the earlier works of St. Thomas; they were written for

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[20] *CG*, II, 9.
[21] *Ibid.*, 16.
[22] *De Pot.*, 7. 9 ad 7.
[23] *Ibid.*, 7. 10.
[24] *Ibid.*, 7. 10 ad 1.
[25] *Ibid.*, 8. 2.

the most part before the year 1260. The *Physics* was probably written after 1260. Why does St. Thomas make no mention of action as some way in the agent in his commentary on the *Physics?* Even if it were granted that he had discarded the view that action is in some way in the agent, it would not follow that the problem is solved. For it remains true that action, as it is numbered among the predicamental accidents, must inhere in a subject. But it seems impossible for it to inhere as an accident either in the agent or in the patient. Before trying to solve this apparent antinomy, let us consider the interpretations of Cajetan and Ferrara.

Concerning the problem of action, various theories have been proposed. The Scotists would claim that if action is a relation the action and relation are identified.[26] Ferrara states that the opinion of the Scotists is that action, considered essentially, is in the agent.[27] Mauri says that Capreolus, Scotus, and Suarez hold that action is inchoatively in the agent and consummatively in the patient; and that Cajetan asserts that action is found in the agent as intrinsically perfecting it.[28] From this rather confusing testimony, let us choose two of the more important Thomistic commentators to give us their solutions.

CAJETAN'S INTERPRETATION[29]

After stating that active power, but not passive potency, can be predicated of God, Cajetan points out that three principles concerning action are formulated by St. Thomas in his treatment of this question; namely that action, if it is distinct from the active potency, is nobler than this potency; that action in creatures has an active potency as its principle; and, finally, that action in God must be identified with his essence.[30] But, Cajetan warns, a certain problem presents itself. For transient action means only motion from the agent or something further.[31] If action signifies only *motus ut ab hoc,* this definition will not be in accord with two of the principles just enunciated. First of all, it has been said that action, if it is distinct from the active potency, must be nobler than that potency. But, objects Cajetan, if action is only *motus ut ab hoc,* then it is not nobler than the motive power of the sphere of Saturn. But what is more important, Cajetan asserts, is the statement that

[26] Cf. A.-D. Sertillanges, *loc. cit.*

[27] Cf. Ferrara, *In II Contra Gentiles;* No. 1, sec. 5.

[28] Mauri, *loc. cit.*

[29] Cajetan's views can be found in his commentary *In I Summae Theologicae,* 25. 1. The following material will be drawn from this source.

[30] *Ibid.;* No. 3.

[31] "Actio transiens, puta movere, ut distinguitur contra effectum, aut solum dicit motum ab hoc, aut aliquid aliud." *Ibid.*

God's action is one with his substance. If we define transient action as *motus ut ab hoc,* we cannot say that this action is identified with the divine substance; but God is evidently capable of this kind of action, since he can, without any medium, move some body. But clearly neither *motion* nor *relation* can be identified with the divine substance, and yet we have assumed that these are all that action implies.

On the other hand, if action be supposed as implying something more than merely motion from the agent, this supposition seems to be in contradiction to what is said in the *Physics,* namely, that action is subjectively in the patient.[32]

Cajetan's answer is that transient action denotes—besides motion and relation—something subjectively in the agent.[33] He formulates a syllogism: transient action signifies something subjectively existing in the created agent, and in God something really identified with the divine substance; but motion as from the agent—*motus ut ab hoc*—since it implies only motion and relation, does not signify something subjectively existing in the agent; therefore, "motion as from the agent" is not the whole of transient action. The major is proved from the ninth chapter of *II Contra Gentiles.* The minor is evident.[34]

It might be claimed that the major premise is true not for one but for *two* reasons. First, in regard to the created agent, it would be true because of the *ratio* of relation, which must subjectively exist in the agent. Secondly, in regard to the uncreated agent, the premise would be true because of the concept of immanent action, which is all that transient action posits in God. But, Cajetan asserts, this way of answering will not suffice.[35] For in the answer to the fourth objection in the article which Cajetan is interpreting, St. Thomas declares that active power can be said to be in God either as an executive power of his intellect and will or as the will itself commanding.[36] Now, Cajetan comments, if the executive or

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[32] "Si vero [actio] significat aliquid aliud, ruunt omnia in III Phys. tradita. Ruere quoque videtur opinio dicens actionem esse subiective in passo . . ." *Ibid.*

[33] "Ad hoc dicendum mihi videtur quod, apud S. Thomam, actio transiens praeter motum et relationem, dicit *aliquid subiective in agente.*" *Ibid.;* No. 4.

[34] "— Minor autem patet resolutive. Constat enim quod, Deo movente vel angelo, in neutro motum esset. Relatio autem, quamvis in angelo esset, in Deo tamen nullo reali modo esset." *Ibid.*

[35] "Et si diceretur ad hanc rationem, quod maior est vera, non ex una, sed diversis radicibus; quia quoad agentia creata, est vera ratione relationis, quam oportet subiective existere in agente; quoad agens vero increatum, est vera ratione actionis immanentis, quam solum in Deo ponit actio transiens, praeter factum et relationem: si sic, inquam, diceretur . . . subtiliter quidem evaderetur, non tamen sufficienter." *Ibid.;* No. 5.

[36] "Dicendum quod potentia non ponitur in Deo ut aliquid differens a scientia

active power in God be considered as distinct from the divine intellect and will, the difficulty presented above in regard to God's action being identified with his substance cannot be solved by simply stating that God's action is always immanent. For Cajetan believes that if an active potency be placed in God as a certain medium it is necessary that transient action also be predicated of God.[37] And as St. Thomas clearly affirms that the power of God may be considered as distinct, we cannot answer the question by merely having recourse to immanent action. Hence Cajetan concludes that the major premise is true for the same reason for every agent. Since neither the *ratio* of relation nor that of motion can be verified universally—that is, of both God and creature—it remains that transient action signifies something further in the agent.[38]

CAJETAN AND THE *PHYSICS*: CRITICISM

Cajetan posits the problem of whether his theory can be reconciled with the text in the *Physics* that states that action signifies merely *motus ut ab hoc*. Cajetan answers that in passion there are three things: motion; a relation, inhering in the subject because of this motion; and the foundation of this relation, which foundation is essentially passion. This latter is either the passive actuation of the subject, or the very being of the form that is being educed, or something similar. Thus also on the part of action there is denoted not only motion and relation, but the *from* signifies first of all the essence of action, namely, the very operation in the agent, on account of which it is perfecting another.[39]

Since this action, as such, is for the perfecting of the patient, it can also be said to be in the patient. In this way, Cajetan concludes, all the conflicting texts in regard to action can be made to agree.

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et voluntate secundum rem, sed solum secundum rationem; inquantum scilicet potentia importat rationem principii exequentis id quod voluntas imperat, et id quod scientia dirigit; quae tria Deo secundum idem conveniunt. Vel dicendum quod ipsa scientia vel voluntas divina, secundum quod est principium effectivum, habet rationem potentiae." *ST*, I, 25. 1 ad 4.

[37] "Nec satisfit ex responsione data, quae ad actiones immanentes, iuxta aeternum modum dicendi, recurrit. Oportet enim, si potentia quasi media in Deo ponitur; quod actio transiens in eo quoque ponatur; et consequenter identificata substantiae suae." *In I Summae Theologicae*, 25. 1; No. 5.

[38] "Et cum nec ratione relationis, nec ratione motus verificatur universaliter, relinquitur quod aliquid aliud actio transiens significat in agente." *Ibid.*

[39] "Quemadmodum enim constat quod in passione sunt tria, scilicet motus, relatio inhaerentiae ipsius motus ad subiectum, et fundamentum illius relationis, quod est essentialiter passio (sive illud sit passiva actuatio subiecti, sive esse formae fluentis ut actuans subiectum, sive quodcumque aliud); ita ex parte actionis, non solum motus et relatio significatur, sed ly *ab* significat prius ipsam essentiam actionis, operationem scilicet in agente propter perficiendum aliud. Sed quoniam propriis vocabulis caremus, nominibus relationum, scilicet praepositionibus *ab* et *in*, utimur ad occulta significanda, ut saepe contingit." *Ibid.*; No. 6.

Cajetan's theory is open to criticism. A more precise distinction as to the way transient action can be said to be in God seems necessary. Further, what is this something that is "subjectively existing in the agent"? Cajetan's conclusion is that the essence of action is the operation in the agent by which it perfects another. But how can action signify an operation in the agent? True, transient action presupposes a certain perfection in the agent: namely, that the agent be in act; but clearly this is not the essence of action. Does not the agent's transient action consist precisely in the motion that it produces in the patient? But if this be admitted, action seems to denote no more than *motus us ab hoc*. We shall find Ferrara taking up Cajetan's arguments in order to refute them.

FERRARA'S INTERPRETATION[40]

In commenting on the first chapter of the second book of St. Thomas's *Summa Contra Gentiles,* Ferrara has occasion to discuss the problem of action at some length. He remarks that St. Thomas, in distinguishing between immanent and transient action, declares that immanent action is the perfection of the agent and transient action of the patient. Ferrara states that St. Thomas has in mind the fact that transient action implies two things: motion, and the origin of motion from the agent. If action be considered in so far as it means motion, it is the perfection of the thing made, since motion is in the thing moved. If transient action be considered in so far as it implies relation of origin, this action is a perfection of the agent, in so far as relation is an accident. It is according to the first meaning that St. Thomas asserts that transient action is the perfection of the patient.[41] But, Ferrara stresses, action as action in no way signifies the perfection of the agent through a mode of inherence, since action is defined not as something existing in the agent but rather as something passing into another from the agent.[42]

St. Thomas maintains that immanent action, as the perfection of the agent, is prior to transient action, which is the perfection

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[40] Most of Ferrara's explanation of action can be found in his commentary on the *Contra Gentiles* (II, 1). His commentaries on Chapters 9 and 16 give us some additional information. His interpretation of *actus perfecti* has already been mentioned.

[41] "Circa primam differentiam, considerandum est primo quod, cum actio transiens duo importet in sua ratione, ut habet Sanctus Thomas . . .; scilicet motum et originem motus ab agente: si consideretur actio quantum ad motum quem importat, sic est perfectio facti, *motus enim est in mobile,* ut dicitur in III Phys.; si autem consideretur quantum ad habitudinem originis sic est perfectio agentis, considerata relatione ut accidens est. Primo modo loquitur hoc loco." *In II Contra Gentiles,* 1; No. 3, sec. 2.

[42] "Nullo autem modo actio, ut actio est, dicit perfectionem agentis per modum inhaerentis. Quia significatur non ut aliquid in agente existens, sed ut ab ipso in aliud transiens." *Ibid.*

of the patient. Ferrara remarks that a difficulty might be proposed on this point: relation to the patient is undoubtedly a certain perfection of the agent, but this relation is not prior to the relation of patient to the agent, which latter relation is a certain perfection of the patient. Accordingly, why should the perfection of the agent be considered as necessarily prior to the perfection of the patient? Ferrara answers this problem by distinguishing the agent's mode of being in act: first, the agent is in act when it has everything needed in order to act; secondly, it is in act in as much as it is really acting. Thus an intellectual nature is in act first of all by conceiving the thing to be produced in the intentional order, and secondly, by then producing it. It is in the first way that immanent action as the perfection of the agent must be prior to transient action. For it is necessary that the agent be in act before acting.

ACTION, PERFECTION OF THE AGENT?

However, Ferrara maintains, there may exist some doubt as to whether transient action is merely the perfection of the patient. In certain Thomistic texts it is asserted that action is in the agent as an accident; and again, that action is a certain perfection proper to the agent; or, it is affirmed sometimes without any qualification that action is in the agent. Hence we may posit this question: does action signify something existing in the agent, or does action only denote motion and relation?[43]

If the second alternative is held, it might be objected that this action—if it signifies only motion and relation—cannot be identified with the divine substance. Further, it would not be true that action is nobler than the active power, for an action that implies only motion and relation could not be nobler than the active power of Saturn.[44] Ferrara asserts that some believe that action essentially considered is in the agent. (This seems to be Cajetan's conclusion.) But this view, Ferrara declares, is more Scotistic than Thomistic. On this account, Ferrara will attempt to prove that action denotes only motion and relation, and hence is in the patient.

To the supposition that action signifies only motion plus relation, some philosophers object that this is a consideration of action as action, but not of action as an accident. Or they assert that if we claim that action denotes only motion and relation, we are taking action for the form produced through the action and are not considering action essentially understood.

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[43] "Quaeritur ergo, an actio dicat aliquid ex sua ratione existens in agente praeter motum et relationem? An dicat tantum motum et relationem?" *Ibid.;* No. 4, sec. 2. This is the question that Cajetan faced. He decided in favor of the former alternative.

[44] These are the two objections raised by Cajetan.

In answer to these objections, Ferrara argues that either the entity posited besides motion and relation is of the very essence of action or it is not. If it is not, then action formally and essentially considered does not denote something existing in the agent.[45] If this entity be said to be of the essence of action in so far as action is a predicament, Ferrara would reply that when St. Thomas affirms that action means only motion and relation, he is speaking precisely of predicamental action. Hence Ferrara concludes that:

> Si praedicamentalis nihil dicit existens in agente quod sit de ratione ipsius: cum actio, inquantum actio praedicamentalis, nihil dicit praeter motum et relationem, secundum Sanctum Thomam, ut tu exponis, licet dicat aliquid aliud inquantum accidens.[46]

It is clear that St. Thomas maintains that action signifies only motion and relation, for he asserts that as creation is not motion, creation implies only a relation of the creature to the Creator. But this statement would not be true if action, as an accident, signified something besides motion and relation. For then it could be affirmed that even though creation is not mutation, yet there would be some absolute entity existing in the Creator, and hence creation would not merely imply relation in the creature.[47]

Ferrara quotes a number of texts to show that when he maintains that action denotes only motion and relation, he is considering action itself and is not confusing it with the form produced in the patient through action. St. Thomas is careful to distinguish between action and the effect produced. And, Ferrara points out, in these passages on action, St. Thomas "fecerit mentionem solum de motu et relatione . . . nullam faciente mentionem de illa entitate absoluta quam dicis (the objector) essentialem actionem esse et esse in agente."[48]

ACTION IN THE PATIENT

Ferrara proceeds to prove that it is St. Thomas's view that action is in the patient and not in the agent. St. Thomas affirms something can be denominated by another thing that is not a form of it, as the agent is denominated by the action that proceeds from it.[49] Therefore, Ferrara concludes, St. Thomas does not teach that action is a form of the agent.[50] When he asserts that transient action is a medium between the agent and object, it is clear that he

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[45] "Ergo nihil actio in agente ponit, et sic habetur propositum: quamvis poneretur aliquid quod est praeter rationem et essentiam actionis, esse in agente." Ferrara, *loc. cit.;* No. 5, sec. 3.

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] "Hoc autem verum non esset si actio, inquantum accidens, diceret aliquid praeter motum et relationem: diceretur enim quod, licet creatio non sit mutatio, dicit tamen aliquam entitatem absolutam existentem in creante; et sic creatio non erit sola relatio." *Ibid.*

[48] *Ibid.;* No. 5, sec. 4.

[49] "Contingit denominari aliquid ab eo quod non sit forma, sicut agens denominatur de actione quae ab ipso procedit." *De Pot.,* 7. 10 ad 8.

recognizes that the agent is not the subject of the action. And this is consistent with the teaching of Aristotle.

This is Ferrara's conclusion:

> Puto igitur de mente Sancti Thomae et Philosophi esse quod actio, essentialiter sumpta, sit in patiente subiective: licet relatio quam connotat, sit in agente. Agens enim, per virtutem suam appropinquatum passo disposito, producit formam de esse imperfecto ad perfectum procedendo (loquendo de agente cum motu); et ipsa forma existens sub esse imperfecto cum tendentia ad perfectum dicitur *actio,* connotando respectum agentis ad id quod fit, quod significatur cum dicitur *motus ut ab hoc;* cadem forma, cum habet esse completum, dicitur *forma facta.* Ideo, sicut forma facta est in patiente, ita et actionem in patiente esse necesse est. Nec oportet actionem dicere aliquam formam absolutam existentem in agente: alioquin oporteret agens, inquantum agens, pati, quod inconveniens est: idem enim proximum principium totale actionis, puta calor ignis, agendo calorem in ligno, in seipso actionem produceret, et sic agendo pateretur a seipso.[51]

Ferrara now turns to the objections which can be drawn from other Thomistic texts: that action is in the agent as an accident, and so on. Ferrara states that when St. Thomas affirms that action is in the agent as accident, he is speaking of immanent action. For *to inhere* does not belong to action universally but only to one of the species of action, namely immanent action. *To inhere* is proper to immanent action because this action is an accident, not simply because it is an action.[52] Hence when St. Thomas maintains that action is not a form of the agent, he is describing transient action. And when it is asserted that action is a perfection of the agent, this does not mean that the action inheres in the agent, but that it is a certain good to the agent in so far as the agent's species is preserved, and so on. When St. Thomas remarks without qualification that action is in the agent, he is speaking of the *relation* implied by the action.[53]

In answer to the objection that if transient action signifies only motion and relation it cannot be identified with the divine sub-

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[50] Ferrara says of St. Thomas: "Vult enim ibidem quod actio realiter non est forma agentis quod denominat, licet significetur per modum formae grammatice loquendo." *In II Contra Gentiles,* 1; No. 6.

[51] *Ibid.;* No. 8.

[52] "Actio enim, absolute accepta, habet quod sit actio et quod sit accidens ratione alicuius suae speciei. Inhaerere autem subiecto non convenit sibi universaliter neque per communem rationem actionis. Quia ratio actionis, ut actio est, consistit in *esse ab alio,* non *inhaerere subiecto:* sed, si aliqua actio inhaereat agenti, ut actio immanens, hoc convenit sibi inquantum accidens est; sicut etiam de relatione inquit Sanctus Thomas. Ideo, si actio immanens invenitur in agente, hoc non est propter communem rationem actionis, sed propter rationem accidentis." *Ibid.;* No. 9.

[53] "In illis locis loquitur Sanctus Thomas de actione quantum ad relationem connotatam: relatio enim importata nomine actionis est in agente; et relatio importata nomine passionis est in patiente. Et universaliter, ubi dicitur a Sancto Thoma actionem esse in agente, intelligendum est aut de relatione per actionem importata, aut de actione immanente." *Ibid.;* No. 9, sec. 3.

stance and that yet God seems to exercise transient action, Ferrara considers the distinction mentioned by Cajetan that the divine action can in a way be said to be transient. But Ferrara will not admit that there is any more than a logical distinction between God's power and his intellect or will. Hence, Ferrara believes, we are not justified in predicating transient activity of God. Though we conceive God's action as if it were transient, it is really only immanent.[54] In regard to the objection about Saturn, Ferrara replies that the concept of action is more perfect than any locomotive power, for the latter is ordered to the former. Thus Ferrara has answered the difficulties raised by Cajetan.

In his commentary on the ninth chapter of the *Contra Gentiles,* Ferrara demonstrates the reason why action and passion can not be identified, since neither of them is completely and in every respect the same as motion. Something can be distinguished *in ratione* in two ways: either because of the defect of our intellect or because of something in the things themselves; so that if they are understood as they are in themselves they are conceived under different concepts. It is in the second way that action and passion

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[54] "Dicitur secundo, ad primo improbationem, quod ideo ponit Sanctus Thomas operationem et actionem divinam qua res in esse producit, suae substantiae identificari, non quia aliquid per actionem transeuntem importatum sibi identificetur, ut argumentum supponit: sed quia non agit in rebus nisi per suam operationem immanentem, quae suae substantiae et suae potentiae identificatur.

"Quod si instetur, quoniam Prima Pars, ubi supra (q. XXV, a. 1) ad 4, duobus modis inquit posse intelligi in Deo esse potentiam activam: scilicet, *ut sit aliquid differens secundum rationem a scientia et voluntate per modum principii exequentis,* ita quod sint tria formaliter distincta, scientia, voluntas, et potentia, realiter tamen identificata; et *ut sit ipsa scientia et voluntas divina ut est principium effectivum.* Et sic, secundum primum modum, oportet ponere actionem transeuntem in Deo. Et per consequens non oportet recurrere ad actionem immanentem. . . .

"Respondetur . . . , admissis etiam illis duabus responsionibus, quod illi duo modi dicendi distinguuntur, quia in primo modo considerantur illa tria tanquam habentia disparatas rationes (a) nobis conceptas, quarum scilicet una alterum non includit, sicut distinguuntur in Deo misericordia et iustitia: in secundo vero modo considerantur, non tanquam habentia omnino distinctas rationes, sed sicut includens rationem unius et aliquid addens ad illam, sic enim potentia includit rationem intellectus et voluntatis, et addit rationem principii productivi. Non tamen propter hoc oportet ponere in Deo operationem proprie transeuntem: sed eadem actio omnibus istis correspondet secundum diversas rationes. Quae est quidem realiter immanens: sed secundum quod refertur ad intellectum et voluntatem; ut videlicet dicitur velle et intelligere, non solum secundum rem est immanens, sed etiam secundum modum concipiendi; secundum autem quod ad potentiam refertur, ut videlicet dicitur producere aut creare, licet sit secundum rem immanens, secundum tamen modum concipiendi est transiens: concipiatur enim ut alterius factio, quae est ratio actioni transeunti conveniens. Hoc autem est ex imperfectione intellectus nostri non valentis divinam actionem, secundum quod in se est, apprehendere, sed distincte concipientis ipsam ut habet perfectionem operationis immanentis, et ut habet perfectionem operationis transeuntis, licet in seipsa has perfectiones indistincte contineat." *Ibid.;* No. 10, sec. 2.

differ. For action denotes something in regard to the agent, a note that motion does not include. And this is clear from the fact that a perfect understanding of motion is possible even though the *ratio* of action is not included.[55]

Ferrara states that transient action does not perfect the active power through the manner of a form but only through the manner of an end, because the power of the agent is ordered to the production of such an action. Hence transient action is not a form perfecting the agent.[56] The *to act* and not the action is the act of the power as perfecting that power.[57] He repeats that transient action as action is not in the agent as an accident.[58]

In commenting on chapter sixteen of the *Contra Gentiles,* Ferrara declares that action is the agent's act received in the patient. It is the act of the agent and of the form, that is, the agent's act and form as produced in the patient in some way. Then he concludes with an explanation of why God's action can not be said to be transient formally but only according to our own way of conceiving it.[59]

Thus Ferrara holds that action, as action, is in the patient; it signifies only motion with a relation to the agent, but it does not denote something further existing in the agent. When St. Thomas asserts that action is in the agent, he means either immanent action or is referring to the relation that is in the agent. Ferrara disagrees with Cajetan's view that God's action can in a way be said to be transient.

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[55] "Sic enim, quia actio et passio, quantum ad id quod est materiale in ipsis, identificantur motui, non autem quantum ad connotata, ideo materialiter sunt eadem inter se, non autem formaliter." *In II Contra Gentiles,* 9; No. 1, sec. 2.

"Attendendum tamen quod aliqua distingui ratione dupliciter contingit. Uno modo, ex solo opere intellectus . . . . Alio modo, ex parte ipsarum rerum, quae habent ut, si concipiantur secundum quod in seipsis sunt, diversis conceptibus concipiantur, sicut est de actione et motu: requirunt enim ex seipsis ut alium conceptum formet de ipsis intellectus, secundum quod actio connotat respectum in agente, quem non dicit motus; quantumcumque enim perfecte comprehendatur motus, non tamen apprehenditur totum quod est de ratione actionis." *Ibid.;* No. 1, sec. 3.

[56] *Ibid.;* No. 2.

[57] "Agere est actus potentiae, . . . Sicut potentia ad essentiam, ita agere ad esse . . . Sicut esse est actus formalis ex quo ens habet ut sit ens, ita agere est actus formalis ex quo agens habet quod sit agens." *Ibid.,* No. 3.

[58] "Actio quae vere est transiens, non est in agente quantum ad ipsum entitatem actionis, quae est motus; est tamen in agente quantum ad relationem connotatam." *Ibid.;* No. 4, sec. 2.

[59] "Intelligendum quod de actione transeunte possumus loqui: aut, inquam, secundum rem et secundum eius propriam rationem . . . aut secundum modum significandi et secundum similitudinem." *Ibid.;* No. 6, sec. 3. And it is only in the latter way that the divine action is said to be transient. Cf. the last section of this article.

But is it true that St. Thomas is always speaking of immanent action when he maintains that action is in the agent? And is not transient action as well as immanent action an accident? As an accident, it must inhere somewhere. Is it a complete answer to say that action denotes merely *motus ut ab hoc?*

MOTION AND ACTION

In order to answer the question of where action is we shall consider the meaning of action in relation to motion, passion, and relation. Finally we shall analyze the basic meaning of *to act.*

From its very definition, it is evident that motion is in the patient as an imperfect act. Transient action means simply motion as from another, and thus it denotes the origin of motion. All of this has been demonstrated.

But when St. Thomas remarks that action, as well as passion, is distinguished from motion, not *in re* but *in ratione,* does this statement imply that action is only logically distinct from motion? Some have thought so. But clearly this is not St. Thomas's view. He means that in motion is understood either action or passion as regards different predicamental *rationes,* which are really different. He has stressed this interpretation in the texts in which he has proved that action and passion are two distinct predicaments. We have noted Ferrara's explanation of this distinction. Another author has solved the problem by asserting that motion is really distinct from action and passion, not indeed as complete being from complete being but as subject of them, that is, as the *subiectum quo.*[60]

We pointed out earlier that if motion be subtracted from action only relation remains. Motion, in a way, implies a certain abstraction; that is, it does not consider the terms. When this consideration is added we have action or passion; this consideration, in regard to action, is precisely that it is from another; and thus it implies relation. Therefore if action be considered without the reality that is motion, it can imply only relation. But as relation is a real being, motion plus the relation to the agent is not the same as pure motion, but is compared to it as complete to incomplete. This "incomplete" aspect of motion is had only by a rational consideration; that is, motion in the concrete is always "from another." Thus, too, motion as received in another will be motion plus the relation in the patient to the agent; and thus is had passion. Again, it is

[60] This is Mauri's solution. His thesis is that: "Actio et passio inter se et a motu, in quo conveniunt ut in communi ipsarum subiecto 'quo' realiter distinguuntur." He says that the *subiectum quo* is that which is the reason why some form is received in the *subiectum quod.* And, he concludes, the *subiectum quod* of action is the agent, and the *subiectum quod* of passion, the patient. As motion is in the patient so also is action. However, action is found in the agent as a certain accident; but action by its very *ratio* is terminated to the motion, which is in turn in the patient.

true that in the concrete motion is always received in a subject. Hence difficulty arises only when it is forgotten that motion is not an absolute reality completely independent of its terms. With these distinctions drawn, it becomes clear that action, motion, and passion are not three univocal concepts.

Thus Sertillanges remarks that, since action is only movement as dependent on an antecedent, all the positive part of action is reduced to the reality of the motion in the mobile. Hence in abstracting from motion we have left only a pure relation, one of the terms of which is the reality of the effect and the other the reality of the agent in ultimate act.[61]

PREDICAMENTAL ACTION AND PASSION

Action and passion constitute two distinct categories. For, St. Thomas asserts, it is not the same thing to cause action and to receive it. Thus action and passion are not the same numerical accident. Of course, it still remains to be shown in what way action as an accident is in the agent. But it is evident that action can not be completely in the patient, for on this supposition action would not be distinct from passion. At least the relation that action implies must be in the agent, even though the motion itself is in the patient. St. Thomas explains the relation of agent to patient thus:

> Movens ut agens naturale movet et agit actione vel motu medio, qui est inter movens et motum agens et passum. Unde oportet quod saltem in hoc medio conveniant agens et patiens, movens et motum. Et sic agens, inquantum est agens, non est extraneum a genere patientis inquantum est patiens. Unde utriusque est realis ordo unius ad alterum.[62]

ACTION AND PREDICAMENTAL RELATION

Relation signifies *ad aliquid*. Thus relation is that whose *to be* is "to have itself" toward another; that is, to the essence is due a *to be* "to another." The predicamental relation is an accident. It is an *ens quo;* St. Thomas calls it the weakest of beings—*debilissimum ens*. It implies three things: subject, term, and foundation. The relation is the order that the subject has to the term because of the foundation. There are only three possible foundations for predicamental relations: quantity, action and passion, or the reason for mensuration.[63] The relation, if it is a real relation, must be distinct from the subject, term, and foundation.

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[61] Cf. A.-D. Sertillanges, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

[62] *De Pot.*, 7. 10 ad 1.

[63] "Ordinatur autem una res ad aliam, vel secundum esse, prout esse unius rei dependet ab alia, et sic est tertius modus. Vel secundum virtutem activam et passivam, secundum quod una res ab alia recipit, vel alteri confert aliquid; et sic est secundus modus. Vel secundum quod quantitas unius rei potest mensurari per aliam, et sic est primus modus." *In V Meta.*, lect. 17.

Now the agent is related to the patient, and the patient to the agent, the basis of this dual relation being the common motion. The meaning of action implies that of relation. As predicamental relation must exist in a subject, the relation consequent on the fact that the motion is from the agent must inhere in the agent. But why does this not imply some change in the subject? This question can be best answered by an investigation of the nature of relation as an accident.

St. Thomas declares that relation denotes one mode of being as an accident and another as relation or order.[64] Inasmuch as it is an *accident,* it is in a subject; but as a *relation* it is not signified as in a subject; for as a relation it merely signifies *to another.* Hence although predicamental relation is something inhering, it is not precisely as a relation that it inheres. And it is here that St. Thomas remarks by way of illustration that although action as action is considered only as *from* the agent, nevertheless action as an accident is *in* the agent. He shows that nothing prevents an accident such as relation from leaving the subject or coming to it without in any way changing that subject intrinsically.[65]

Hence we can understand why the relation that follows on action can inhere, in a way, in the agent without producing any intrinsic change in that subject. Difficult as this may be to comprehend, it is nevertheless the only answer possible if the reality of relations is to be maintained.

Among the nine predicaments that are accidents, some are signified according to the *ratio* of accident, as are quantity and quality. But *ad aliquid* is not so signified, for it does not designate that in which it is but something extrinsic.[66] Thus some philosophers con-

[64] St. Thomas explains that there are two things to be noted in the predicaments that are of the accidental order: ". . . considerandum est quod in quolibet novem generum accidentis est duo considerare. Quarum unum est esse quod competit unicuique ipsorum secundum quod est accidens. Et hoc communiter in omnibus est inesse subiecto, accidentis enim esse est inesse. Aliud quod potest considerari in unoquoque, est propria ratio uniuscuiusque illorum generum." *ST,* I, 28. 2. We shall see how this applies to predicamental action.

[65] "Relatio quae nihil est aliud quam ordo unius creaturae ad aliam aliud habet inquantum est accidens, et aliud inquantum est relatio vel ordo. Inquantum enim accidens est, habet quod sit in subiecto, non autem inquantum est relatio vel ordo; sed solum quod ad aliud sit quasi in aliud transiens, et quodam modo rei relatae assistens. Et ita relatio est aliquid inhaerens, licet non ex hoc ipso quod est relatio; sicut et actio ex hoc quod est actio consideratur ut ab agente; inquantum vero est accidens, consideratur ut in subiecto agente. Et ideo nihil prohibet quod esse desinat huiusmodi accidens sine mutatione eius in quo est: quia sua ratio non perficitur prout est in ipso subiecto, sed prout transit in aliud; quo sublato, ratio huius accidentis tollitur quidem quantum ad actum, sed manet quantum ad causam." *De Pot.,* 7. 9 ad 7.

[66] "*Ad aliquid* non significatur secundum rationem accidentis: non enim significatur ut aliquid eius in quo est, sed ut ad id quod extra est." *De Pot.,* 8. 2.

cluded that relations were not accidents, but were, in some way, between the subject and the term. But this conclusion can not be accepted, for on this supposition relation would not be a real thing, since every real thing must be either substance or accident; hence, every relation would be a being of reason. Rather, it must be said that nothing prohibits a thing from inhering as an accident, which nevertheless is not signified as inhering; for example, St. Thomas remarks, action is not signified as in the agent but as from the agent, and yet action is in the agent. Hence although relation is not signified as inhering, nevertheless it does inhere as an accident.[67]

RELATION OF AGENT TO PATIENT

We may now consider why and when the agent is related to the patient. Mutual relations are found in those things on both sides of which there is some reason for the order of one to the other. (Thus, as we saw, creatures can be related to God, but the converse is not true.) If there is any real order among created things, there must be real relations. The basis of some of these relations is the action of one thing on another. The agent and patient are related in so far as there is a common bond between them, namely, motion. An agent has some order to the thing it causes when there is some good accruing to the agent from its action: either the agent is preserving its own species, or the agent is reduced to act in order that it may exercise this motion; and thus this action is, in a sense, its end. Hence that an agent be a moved mover is a certain sign or indication that this agent will be really related to the patient that it in turn moves or reduces to act.[68] But God is in no way really related to creatures, not only because he is an unmoved mover, but also because the effect can in no sense be attributed to God as a good or as something that he must necessarily produce.

If action implies relation, does it follow that action and relation are identified? St. Thomas would not admit this conclusion. Action has a positive reality in the successive continuum of the motion itself. Thus it does not merely denote relation. In God alone does relation equal action. Hence predicamental action is motion inasmuch as that motion implies relation. Therefore, action is not a pure relation. Mauri states that action and passion do not belong to the predicament of relation because the reality of both precedes

[67] "Nihil prohibet aliquid esse inhaerens quod tamen non significatur ut inhaerens; sicut etiam actio non significatur ut in agente, sed ut ab agente, et tamen constat actionem esse in agente. Et similiter licet ad aliquid non significatur ut inhaerens, tamen oportet ut sit inhaerens." *Ibid.*

[68] "Quod movens movetur, non est causa quare relatio moventis in eo sit realiter, sed signum quoddam. Et hoc enim apparet quod aliquo modo coincidit in genus moti, ex quo et ipsum movet motum; et iterum apparet quo ipsum ad quod movetur, sit quoddam bonum eius, ex quo ad hoc per suum motum ordinatur." *De Pot.*, 7. 10 ad 2.

relation. Relation, he argues, is immediately founded on some absolute disposition of the subject that is referred to another, but action depends on motion that is in another. Hence, he concludes, action is not a relation, though it has a close affinity to it.[69] As action and passion are realities, real mutual relations flow from them: the patient is referred to the agent, and the agent is related to the patient.

St. Thomas maintains that action and passion inasmuch as they imply motion are distinct from the relations which follow them.[70] Relation persists after the action has ceased.[71] Therefore relation does not constitute the exclusive factor of action. Rather, action combines both motion and the relation from the agent to the patient. Hence we would not be justified in concluding that relation and action are identified.

WHERE IS ACTION?

To the question of where action is, Ferrara's answer seems more satisfactory than that of Cajetan. Ferrara has declared that action, essentially considered, is in the patient; in the agent there is only the relation that the action connotes. Nor, he asserts, can it be objected that action, though it is not signified as being in the agent, is in the agent; for according to St. Thomas action is not a form of the agent; and if at times it is signified as being in the agent, this is only a logical signification. Ferrara explains that *to inhere* does not belong to action as action; he contends that action simply signifies *esse ab alio* and not *inhaerere subiecto*. And he concludes that *to inhere* belongs only to immanent action.

However, there are certain difficulties involved in Ferrara's explanation. St. Thomas clearly asserts that action as one of the predicaments must inhere in a subject, for all the predicaments except substance are accidents. Therefore even transient action must inhere somewhere. Ferrara has admitted that only transient action is predicamental action. Hence his answer to the problem of the mode of inherence of action is insufficient. Indeed, St. Thomas explicitly declares that action inheres in a subject, although, he adds, it is not signified as inhering. Hence we must conclude that, at best, Ferrara's answer is incomplete.

It is clear that action as motion is in the patient. But where is action as an accident? As an accident, it can not inhere in the

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[69] Mauri, *loc. cit.*

[70] ". . . actiones et passiones, inquantum motum implicant, aliud sunt a relationibus quae ex actionibus et passionibus consequuntur." *ST*, I, 41. 1 ad 2.

[71] ". . . dum est in ipso moveri patiens vel factum transmutatur ab agente; cum autem est in termino motus, non ulterius transmutatur ab agente, sed consequitur factum quamdam relationem ad agentem, prout habet esse ab ipso." *De Pot.*, 3. 3.

patient; for if it did, action would be identified with passion. Indeed, St. Thomas asserts that action and passion have diverse subjects. The following seems a possible solution.

Action considered as motion from another must be in the patient, because motion must be in that of which it is the act; further, the relation that action connotes is in the agent, for the agent is the principle and cause of the action. But, besides this relation, action as a predicamental accident is in the agent. It is not signified as inhering, just as relation is not signified as inhering. Action, in some strange fashion, does not make a composition with the agent; the whole reality of action is *not* in the agent because the whole reality of action includes motion. In this sense predicamental action may be compared to relation, which can cease to be in the subject without causing any change in that subject. Thus action as an accident inhering in the agent does not mean that the agent is changed, for change is motion, and the action as motion is not in the agent but in the patient.

I am not certain that this would be the ultimate conclusion of St. Thomas. He certainly makes no mention of this theory in his *Physics;* but, on the other hand, he does not say anything against such a theory. And such an explanation is implied in his other references to the problem of action. His assertions that action and passion are numerically different accidents in diverse subjects and that action is in the agent as an accident are both in accord with the theory just expounded. And we may find further confirmation of this interpretation in his comparison of the inherence of relation, which is not designated as inhering, with the mode of being of action as an accident which, though it only denotes "from the agent," is nevertheless in the agent as an accident. When St. Thomas contends that action does not form composition with the agent or when he affirms that action is only in the agent as to its principle, he is considering action as it implies motion. Sertillanges remarks that action and passion are constituted less by an adherence than by an extrinsic denomination; if they adhere in a certain manner, as do all accidents, it is not according to themselves but according to their principle and term that they do so. We have already mentioned Mauri's theory that action as an accident is in the agent, which is the *subiectum quod* of the motion.

Thus as an accident action denotes no further perfection in the sense of a change being produced in the agent. If it be admitted that relation can be in the agent in this way, why not admit that the same thing is true of action? The agent, as in act, is constituted as agent. The communication of its act is in another; but that this communication of its act is the agent's action is more evident if we admit that this action is in the agent as an accident. And if

transient action is in the agent as an accident, this is more reason why transient action cannot be really predicated of God.[72]

For a more complete answer to the question of action in general, it is evident that certain points need to be studied in more detail. The more important of these are the meaning of relation and its mode of inherence, and the meaning and prominence of *actus perfecti* in St. Thomas's philosophy.

THE MEANING OF ACT

The meaning of action has an important bearing on certain philosophical problems. It is closely associated with the notion of being, for a being *is* and *acts* in so far as it is in act. The explanation of action as motion is important in the philosophy of nature. It is necessary to elucidate the meaning of action in order to show that not every mover is necessarily moved and that action implies no imperfection in the agent. It is through this analysis that we can rise to the proof of an Unmoved Mover, who is Pure Act.

We have indicated earlier why it is most important that action be really attributed to creatures. Further, an analysis of action shows

[72] Transient action, since it is predicamental action, implies two things in the agent: a real relation to the patient and the action's inherence as an accident in that agent. As this action is of the accidental order, it can in some way—in so far as it implies motion—be said to be in the patient. This would not be possible if the action were identified with the agent's substance, for clearly then the action would necessarily be wholly intrinsic to the agent. Hence St. Thomas contends that: "Actio quae non est substantia agentis inest ei sicut accidens subiecto: unde et actio inter novem praedicamenta accidentis computatur. In Deo autem non potest esse aliquid per modum accidentis. In Deo igitur sua actio non est aliud a sua substantia et a sua potentia." *CG*, II, 9. We can infer this conclusion: a being capable of true transient action must be capable of acquiring new perfection: namely, a real relation to the patient, and an action that is in it as an accident; hence a being that exercises true transient action must be composed of act and potency, for only such a being can really acquire new perfection. Thus we are justified in maintaining that God's action is, at the most, transient only by a logical signification. For God's action is one with his substance; hence it can not be received into a finite substance; there is not a real relation of God as agent to his creature, but at most this is a relation of reason. Finally, his action is not an accident in his substance; but true predicamental action does imply that this action be an accident in the agent. Thus Ferrara was correct in affirming that transient action is most proper to creatures, since their action is always formally immanent. If it be claimed that God's action can be transient in the sense that a relation of reason in God as agent will suffice, this supposition can be admitted. But it seems to me that even though we call it transient action, we must at the same time recognize that this is according to our way of conceiving it, and that God's action in this instance is not really transient, for it lacks the elements of true transient action, namely a real relation and the inherence of action as an accident in the agent. Of course we must realize that in saying that God's action can not be transient we are not implying any imperfection or lack of power in him. For his action can be virtually transient, and yet that action in itself possesses the perfect immanency of an *actus perfecti*, which perfection a creature's transient action clearly lacks.

that the "law of reaction" is limited in its application to the level of material agents. Finally, in treating the problem of action we must remember that it is necessary to consider action in a manner proper to philosophical research; on the level of imagination it is a futile task to hope to understand action.

Why are beings not always acting? There are several reasons. Agents may fail in their actions, if they are composed of potency and act, and thus can not only act but can be acted upon. Or the action may fail because of the recipient. Further, in creatures, there is needed certain ultimate dispositions in order that they may act. For their active potencies, since they are not in perfect act, require certain extrinsic aids in order to act. Finally, there must be added the influence of the whole causal chain, even God, upon which any particular manifestation of action depends.

But what does *act* mean? Operation is the second or ultimate act, as we have noted. But what precisely is *agere?* The term "act" is taken from operation. Here we are in the existential order, and we may encounter some difficulty in attempting to understand this problem fully. Because of our mode of knowing it is easier to think of *things* or essences, than of *to be* or *to act.*[73]

By its nature whatever is in act moves, and whatever is in potency is moved.[74] It is the nature of act that it communicate itself in so far as this is possible. Hence each thing acts in so far as it is in act. For *to act* is nothing other than to communicate that by which the agent is in act.[75] Hence: "Agere autem, quod nihil est aliud quam facere aliquid actu, est per se proprium actus, inquantum est actus. Unde et omne agens agit sibi simile."[76]

Sertillanges ends his analysis of the meaning of action with a penetrating conclusion. If one asks, he remarks, what the nature

[73] Gilson makes this interesting comment on the meaning of action: "If . . . we would arrive at an exact understanding of the mediaeval conception of causality, we must ascend to the very act of existence, for it is clear that if being is act, the causal act must necessarily be rooted in the very being of the cause. This relation is expressed in the technical distinction, somewhat alarming at first sight, but very clear in the upshot, between *first* act and *second* act. The first act is the being of the thing, of that which is called being in virtue of the very act of existing exerted: *ens dicitur ab actu essendi:* the second act is the causal operation of this being, the intrinsic or extrinsic manifestation of its first actuality by the effects it produces within or without itself. That is why causal action, which is nothing but an aspect of the actuality of the being as such, finally resolves itself into a transmission or communication of being: *influxum quemdam ad esse causati*" *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy,* pp. 89-90.

[74] "Natura sua quidquid est actus movet, et quidquid est potentia movetur." *In VIII Phys.,* lect. 5.

[75] "Natura cuiuslibet actus quod est seipsum communicat quantum possibile. Unde unumquodque agens agit secundum quod in actu est. Agere vero nihil aliud est quam communicare illud per quod agens est actu secundum quod est possibile." *De Pot.,* 2. 1.

[76] *ST,* I, 115. 1.

of that bond is that establishes the order of causal dependence; how the agent can act so that something is passed into the patient (manifestly one cannot have recourse to another action under penalty of going on to infinity): it must be said that the *to act*, from this point of view, can be comprehended only by the idea of law. Being has for its law: to act. The act is, of itself, dynamic. Good is diffusive; perfection in some way introduces expansion. Thus we reach the primordial essence of things. The will of God is the origin of all movement of nature; this is why his operation is required in all operations of nature. The application to act, the exercising of action—which is the ultimate constituent of the agent as such—is attributed to God supremely; this application to act in creatures is, hence, only the expanding into particular laws of the first and universal divine law. Action is only the manifestation of form; form is the principle of being. Since being is resolved into substance and accident, the accident acts only in virtue of the substance. And since substance from its form is really an idea, and since all that is, is in perpetual dependence on and emanation from its Source, and the latter is only Intelligible Law, it follows that all in moving and acting nature is order, idea, relation, and law.[77]

CONCLUSION

Thus, we may conclude, the action of the creature is a certain reflection of the divine action. Two forms of action are possible to the creature. The first is transient action, which is the action most proper to composed and limited being, since, in a sense, it implies limited perfection. This action is properly the perfection of the patient; in its essential nature, it is in that patient. But certain created agents are capable of higher activity: immanent action. When such action does not of its nature imply a going from potency to act, or an acting of one part on another, there is reached the highest form of action: *actus perfecti*. In this instance the perfect or perfected agent acts, and that action is its end. Here the nature of being is seen in its most dynamic aspect. By such an action, the creature, in some remote and imperfect way, approaches to a likeness of divine activity.

MARIANNE THERESE MILLER

Maryville College
St. Louis University

[77] Cf. A.-D. Sertillanges, *op. cit.*

BOOK REVIEWS

JEAN DUNS SCOT, UN DOCTEUR DES TEMPS NOUVEAUX. By Béraud de Saint-Maurice. Thérien Frères, Montreal, 1944. Pp. xiii + 315. $1.25.

This book is at once an exposition, a defense, and a eulogy of John Duns. As a eulogy it is imaginative, impassioned, sentimental, and apocalyptic. Certainly, John Duns as a romantic young Scot is an intriguing figure. As a panacea for modern ills, from Gallicanism to Communism, Duns becomes even more interesting and piquant. And, without a doubt, as a seer who recognized the possibilities of modern subatomic physics, John Duns cannot but capture the imagination by the magic of his vision. The author of the book under review, therefore, fired by a tremendous zeal for a figure of such greatness, has undertaken to rescue Duns from oblivion, to show his essential modernity, to defend his rights against St. Thomas Aquinas, and even to insist that on some points the Subtle Doctor was an improvement on the Angelic Doctor.

Now an effort to expound the thought of John Duns is an extremely welcome and desirable thing at the present moment. In fact, it is a necessity. Duns as a man, as a philosopher, and as a theologian is still a puzzling figure to his historians. But M. de Saint-Maurice has not contributed to the clarification of this puzzle. On the contrary, there is such a conflict of motives and purposes in his book, such an anxiety to stress the authentically and integrally Christian character of the Scotistic message to the world, that even the most benevolent reader will feel annoyed. We are sure, after reading the book, that the author is a warm and loyal follower of Duns. Unfortunately, we are not sure that he knows Duns. He presents highly controverted Scotistic doctrines as patent and impregnable truths. He makes truly astonishing concordances, as for example when he says that the Thomistic and Scotistic proofs for the existence of God are mutually complementary (p. 137). Where he cannot achieve a concordance, he does not hesitate to present St. Thomas with disfiguring carelessness, as on pages 174-77.

The reader of this review will miss the point of the above lines if he takes them to be merely a protest against a eulogy of John Duns. Quite the contrary, I am simply protesting against an inept eulogy. Duns' greatness and place in history are assured. It is not a service to him to prove that, though St. Thomas is popular today, he was not always popular; or that in the Middle Ages it was Duns, not St. Thomas, who was popular. Perhaps so. But surely there are more serious things for the student of the Subtle Doctor to do than to indulge fretfully in such futile banalities.

For meantime the real work of interpreting John Duns still remains to be done. In such an interpretation, particularly of the Scotistic metaphysics, the name and influence of Avicenna, which M. de Saint-Maurice does not even consider, will be a central problem. Duns lived at a moment in history when Aristotelianism, having ruined many theses of Bonaventurean Augustinianism, was itself ruined by Averroism. Duns lived in the shadow of these ruinations,

and the decisions he reached on the proper relations between reason and revelation bear indelibly the mark of the events of 1277.

Anyone who wishes to see Duns in relation to his own world, and particularly in the light of the condemnations of 1277, could profitably begin by reading some pages in Gilson's *La philosophie au moyen âge* (2nd ed., Paris: Payot, 1945, pp. 591-609). Seen in the historical perspective that Gilson suggests, Duns is both a great conservative force and a characteristic voice in Christian thought after the philosophical disasters of the Averroistic condemnations. Such a perspective indicates the gulf which separates John Duns from St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas had thought that there was no reason why he should identify philosophy itself with what the philosophers, Greek and Arabian, had said in its name. Duns thought that there was; and that is why he set out to rescue philosophy from the errors of the philosophers by means of theology. Such a difference is much too profound and crucial for Christian thought, mediaeval and modern, and it is much too pertinent to the study of the Scotistic metaphysics to be allowed to be forgotten, even in the name of a most ecstatic eulogy.

ANTON C. PEGIS.

Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
Toronto, Canada

AUGUSTINE'S QUEST OF WISDOM. By Vernon J. Bourke, Ph. D. Bruce, Milwaukee, 1945. Pp. ix + 323. $3.00.

René Fülop-Miller in his latest book, *The Saints That Moved the World,* calls Augustine "the Saint of the Intellect," "the first great teacher of rational thought," the scholar who laid "the foundation on which the first European universities were built." Making all due allowance for the Hungarian author's flamboyance and faulty erudition, we have here the seeds of truth. But we shall not go to him for their explanation and development; we shall go to Doctor Vernon J. Bourke, a patient, careful scholar, who knows his St. Augustine, has a thorough grasp of much of his many-sided thought, and hence can tell us far more convincingly why Augustine was a saint who really moved the world.

Augustine's Quest of Wisdom is neatly divided into four parts—the rhetorician, the Christian philosopher, the bishop's work, and the mature mind of St. Augustine. Parts three and four cover practically the same period of time (391-430 A.D.), part three being more negative, since it is concerned with the anti-Donatist and anti-Pelagian controversies, and part four more positive, setting forth the masterful treatises on the Trinity, on Genesis, and on the City of God. Doctor Bourke's rather unusual procedure is to mesh the life and thought of Augustine. This presents a truer and more realistic account of his physical, mental, and moral development from his restless, turbulent youth when passion held sway, to his middle years of reason, to his last years of deep faith and perhaps also of vision. No detail is considered too insignificant. We are told Augustine's intimate physical traits—even his ailments (toothache, insomnia, and stomach and chest trouble)—and all that mysterious interplay of mind, will, and passion that make up his rich, complex psychology. Doctor Bourke shows the development of St. Augustine's thought chiefly by analyzing his works in their chronological order, as they appear in his life, and by inserting syntheses of the important stages of the Saint's odyssey to wisdom. The result is a clear and orderly presentation. Fifteen years of graduate teaching and research on the subject are guarantees of Doctor Bourke's solid scholarship. Throughout the book there is a conscious striving for minute his-

torical accuracy. The style, however, while light and sparkling in the opening chapters, unfortunately becomes dry and somewhat monotonous as the book proceeds.

The scope of the wisdom mentioned in the title is indicated by the subtitle, "Life and Philosophy of the Bishop of Hippo." Accordingly, it would be unfair to reproach the author for not giving a thorough treatment of St. Augustine's thought on Holy Scripture, dogmatic theology, or asceticism and mysticism. Although St. Augustine is primarily a theologian, and indeed the great theological Doctor of Grace and of the Trinity, Doctor Bourke designedly restricts his study chiefly to St. Augustine the philosopher. Even when discussing the Saint's theological treatises he is looking almost exclusively to philosophical wisdom, hence, partial wisdom, wisdom more human than divine.

The existence of God, the human soul, the will and its freedom, the problem of evil—these are some of the philosophical questions discussed with competence, the author seeking support from Alfaric, Gilson, and Boyer, though he does not hesitate on occasion to disagree with them and with other scholars too, such as Bertrand and Burton. In the judgment of the reviewer the best section of the book is that devoted to Augustine's theory of intellectual illumination with its Platonic and Plotinian implications. Here Doctor Bourke shows himself a master of his subject. Some striking statements of the author are these: "[Augustine] never acquired a good understanding of the philosophy of Aristotle"; "he was a self-made philosopher and even, to some extent, a self-made theologian"; "the thought of St. Augustine is centered in spiritual realities: it is psychocentric and theocentric"; "it should be noted that *retractatio* does not mean retraction, but 're-treatment.'" This is Doctor Bourke's comprehending description of Augustinism (pp. 301-2):

> What, finally, is the secret of the influence of Monnica's son? The answer lies in the fact that Augustine has been able to point the way to the ultimate satisfaction of all the higher aspirations of the human soul. Augustinism is in no sense a system either of philosophy or of theology. Nor is it merely a method. It is a spirit which stems from the intuitive wisdom of a great personality. The love of God, charity, is the ultimate source of this Augustinian spirit. Its proximate origin is the love of the things of the soul. All of the thinking of Augustine begins with his soul and ends with God. This makes Augustinism at once a spiritual psychology and a supernaturalism. In it humanism finds its climax in the love of Him, who not only made man for Himself but who became Man.
>
> Perhaps the greatest lesson that Augustine has to teach is that wisdom and true happiness are not to be bought, or handed over by other creatures like a chattel, but is solely the result of divinely aided, personal effort. Each man may reach a different degree of understanding of his own nature and its destiny—such understanding is always the culmination of a private and somewhat solitary quest of wisdom. One may be helped by others, as Augustine was by Monnica, by Ambrose, by Simplicianus. But it is not from other men that wisdom comes. Contemplative repose of soul is found only in God.

All in all, Doctor Bourke has done an excellent piece of work, despite some very minor flaws, mainly in the footnotes. To correct the one on page 88: Father A. Ellard, S.J., on the occasion mentioned, was merely explaining the opposite opinion; he himself holds with Butler, Boyer, and Cayré, namely, that Augustine was a true mystic. The two Appendices, one a chronological

list of all the works of Augustine, the other a summary of the main events of Augustine's life with their documentary sources, are very valuable and useful. The bibliography is found in the footnotes and includes most of the outstanding Augustinian scholars. If someone were to ask the reviewer how to set about the study of Augustine's philosophy, he would answer: "Read Bourke, then Gilson, then the master himself, beginning with the *Confessions* and the *De Beata Vita.*" Augustine's theology and spirituality have not yet received an adequate treatment in English. Perhaps Doctor Bourke will direct his efforts during the next fifteen years to filling that lacuna. He could do it.

AUGUSTINE KLAAS, S.J.

St. Mary's College
St. Marys, Kansas

PHYSICS AND PHILOSOPHY. A STUDY OF SAINT THOMAS' COMMENTARY ON THE EIGHT BOOKS OF ARISTOTLE'S PHYSICS. By James A. McWilliams, S.J. (Philosophical Studies of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, Volume II) American Catholic Philosophical Association, Washington, 1945. Pp. viii + 143. $2.00 (paper) and $2.50 (cloth).

The commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas on the major philosophical works of Aristotle contain a good deal of the finest thought of the thirteenth century. They are big works, and it is unlikely that they will ever be completely translated into English. It seems to be the feeling of competent scholars that they are chiefly of value to specialists and that the labor and cost of putting them into English would not be compensated for by their limited utility. However, Thomistic philosophy in its original form must remain partly unknown to students who cannot read these works in Latin. It is possible that some such method of summary and partial translation as has been used by Father McWilliams in the present book may supply the answer to the difficulty.

Of course, the *Commentary on the Physics of Aristotle* could have been printed in full in two large English volumes. Some parts of it would be found rather antiquated, and some parts would parallel sections of other works now available in our language. Yet a volume of selections would lose the continuity and context of the closely-knit Thomistic exposition. Father McWilliams has made an extended analysis of the argument of the *Commentary* on the whole of the eight books. This précis runs through almost seventy pages and is complete enough to give the reader a sense of the organic thought of the work.

One of the most interesting and well-developed sections of the *Commentary* is the treatment of motion in the first five *Lectiones* of Book Three. This part has been translated in full by Father McWilliams. It makes up more than twenty pages of the present work. This is very useful, even to experts, and the translation serves to illustrate the very real difficulties facing anyone who wishes to make a literal rendition of the text of St. Thomas. As the translator points out, there are many technical Latin terms for which we have no accurate words in English. The historical fact is that English became a vehicle for philosophical discussion in a period (let us say, that of Francis Bacon and Shakespeare) when the manner of thinking was already foreign to Thomism. When Bacon, or Hobbes, or Locke speak of substance, power, law, cause, motion, action, or other key-concepts of this sort, the meaning is always a somewhat nominalistic one. We are deceived if we ignore this.

Let us apply this to Newton and the English terminology of physics that derived from his Latin *Principia.* When he suggested that action and reaction are equal and opposite, he gave to *action* a signification which is quite different from the Thomistic *actio.* As a result the term *passio,* which is a correlative in Thomistic language, lost its English equivalent. When we speak of *passion* in English, we find that the physical meaning has given way entirely to the psychological and moral connotation. Yet there is no other term by which to translate *passio.*

Similarly, ***motus*** must be understood in a Thomistic context in function of the theory of potency and act. This latter theory has simply dropped out of English thought, and with it have gone its technical terms. An intelligent reading of Father McWilliams's work will help to restore these precise terms of analysis.

It is my impression that the modern physicist does not think at all in terms of passive operational potency. The concept of force seems to be exclusively an active one. It suggests a sort of pure putting-forth of energy, which begins to be adopted as the meaning of *operation* or *action* in later Scholasticism. Father McWilliams's introductory studies of the "Laws of Motion" and "What Motion Is" serve very well to draw attention to this point. His remarks on the essentially metaphysical character of the Aristotelico-Thomistic physics are particularly good.

At the end of the book there is a briefer summary of the main propositions of each of the eight books of the *Commentary.* In another section references are given to passages in the two *Summas,* in which important doctrines of the *Physics* are used. There is a selected bibliography and a three-page index.

The whole study is done with the author's customary competence. It is the sort of work which can be used with profit by the student of general metaphysics, cosmology, and the philosophy of nature. Some of the material in Book Eight is useful as background reading for a course in theodicy. While something in the way of annotation of the historical antecedents of the *Commentary* would have added to the value of the work for research scholars, Father McWilliams did not feel that such an apparatus would fit the original plan of his study. As the bibliography shows, there has really been very little done in English on the Thomistic philosophy of nature. This book is a welcome addition to this meagre literature.

VERNON J. BOURKE

St. Louis University

BOOK NOTICES

THE CREATIVE MIND. By Henri Bergson. Translated by Mabelle L. Andison. Philosophical Library, New York, 1946. Pp. 307. $3.75.

Philosophers, not unlike the rest of men, are apt to be maligned by critics who judge, find fault with, and reject without really understanding what they criticize. As we read *The Creative Mind* we somehow suspect that M. Bergson was keenly aware of the fact or the possibility of such misunderstanding and misinterpretation when he wrote and grouped together his last collection of essays, and that he intended precisely to make his own concept of philosophy clear by pointing out some of these misinterpretations and warning against others. Short of reading all of M. Bergson's works one could hardly find a better way of becoming acquainted with the spirit of his philosophy than to read *The Creative Mind*. The book is a clear and sincere presentation of what the author is convinced is the one proper method for philosophical thought, the only method that will make philosophical inquiry alive and fruitful.

A good third of the book (up to page 107) is given over to two introductory articles, written especially for this volume, in which the problem of philosophical method is stated and explained. The remaining two-thirds is a reprint of lectures and articles written by M. Bergson between 1903 and 1923. Four of these essays are explanations of the proper philosophical method—the Bergsonian method, of course: "The Possible and the Real," "Philosophical Intuition," "The Perception of Change," and "Introduction to Metaphysics." The last three essays are devoted each to a thinker whom M. Bergson proposes as a successful example of his method at work: Claude Bernard, William James, and Ravaisson.

In his reaction against negative and pessimistic philosophies that limit the field of philosophical inquiry and make philosophy either an empty dialectic or something subservient to science, M. Bergson insists again and again that philosophers for the most part have altogether mistaken their calling, have substituted static concepts for the fluidity of reality, and have made knowledge a matter of logic and not, as it should be, a matter of intuition. These three words are presented as the keys to the Bergsonian method: reality, fluidity, intuition. Because the very essence of reality is its constantly changing, flowing, vital character, all attempts to make reality static by means of concepts is a departure from the truth; and the conclusions based upon these static concepts, which in no wise represent reality as it is, are evidently quite powerless to furnish a picture of the reality that is. Systems thus built up are bound to be purely artificial and utterly untrue, with the result that they deserve the charge of being impractical, useless, and vacuously speculative. When, however, the philosopher brings his consideration to bear upon the fluid character of the real, as known by an "intuition," making no attempt to translate into static concepts the reality that is changing, a true metaphysic is the result. Though it is definitely not science, it goes hand in hand in

perfect harmony with science. M. Bergson is at pains to show that his method raises the dignity of both science and philosophy. Much is made of the often misunderstood or not understood Bergsonian intuition, all-important to the method. On this point the few paragraphs beginning on page 91 are well worth reading. Here M. Bergson explains as clearly as he possibly can just what he understands by the term "intuition."

Whether or not one agrees with M. Bergson's views on the proper method to be followed by the philosopher, one cannot, while reading *The Creative Mind*, be unaware of the deep honesty and sincerity of its author. Here is a man crusading for what he is convinced is the truth, carefully choosing word, phrase, and example. Any observable lack of clearness and definiteness is manifestly not attributable to careless expression or conscious avoidance of the issue; it is due rather to the subtlety—the very fluidity, if we may use the word—of the matter under discussion. Bergson's writing is alive, and his felicitous use of examples is exceptional.

Many a reader skips the notes in a volume like this, particularly when, as in the present case, they are grouped at the end of the text. But some of the notes of *The Creative Mind* should not be skipped, particularly the fifth note to the first chapter, in which the author explains what he understands by relativity.

Unlike many another translation of a philosophical work the translation of *The Creative Mind* is really well done. Anyone who has had experience with such a task knows that the vivid brilliance of a fine French style offers great difficulty to one attempting to reproduce it in the more austere and unimaginative medium of the English language. Miss Andison has performed her task of translation very well indeed and has been wise in occasionally including the original French word in parentheses where the exactness of the French word defied translation.

No Bergson collection can be complete without a copy of *The Creative Mind*. Again let me say that for a quick and exact understanding of Bergson's philosophy it is invaluable.

CHRISTIAN L. BONNET, S.J.

St. Louis University

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